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Acute Respiratory Infections

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Lessons, stories, and activities in the Acute Respiratory Infection Lesson Plan complement the information provided in Acute Respiratory Infection Leader Mother Flipchart.

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Lesson 1: Respiratory Infections Defined, Effects and Danger signs

Materials for Lesson 1:
1. Attendance Registers
2. Seven rocks and a watch or phone to shows minutes and seconds

1. Game: Cough, Sneeze, Sniff

2. Attendance and Troubleshooting

3. Story: Hardship Has a Cough (Picture 1.1)
The rainy season comes and Hardship begins coughing. His nose is full of thick yellow liquid\(^1\). After three days, Ruth’s husband notices that Hardship’s chest looks different. His lower chest sinks when he inhales. “Should we take Hardship to the clinic?” Ruth’s husband asks. “Is this sickness serious?” Ruth’s husband does not know.

4. Ask

? What is the child’s sickness?
? Should he take the child to the clinic? Why?
? What are the danger signs?

Let’s compare your thoughts with the messages on the following pages.

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* Materials with an asterisk should be organized by the Activity Leader.

\(^1\) Use a local word for mucus (thick jelly-like liquid).
The rainy season comes and Hardship begins coughing. His nose is full of thick yellow liquid.

After three days, Ruth’s husband notices that Hardship’s chest looks different. His lower chest sinks when he inhales. “Should we take Hardship to the clinic?” Ruth’s husband asks. “Is this sickness serious?”
Respiratory Infection Defined (Picture 1.2)

5. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

6. Explain

- Respiratory infections are a sickness of the nose, throat, and chest.
  - In this picture, we see the respiratory organs inside Hardship’s body.
  - The arrows point to the nose, throat, and lungs.
  - The nose, throat, and lungs help the body to breathe.

- This sickness fills the nose, throat, and lungs with thick liquid.
  - Within one or two days a child can become very sick.
  - In this picture, Hardship has a respiratory infection.
  - The thick liquid fills the passages in his nose, throat and lungs.
  - When there is sickness, the thick liquid may turn yellow or green.

- The thick liquid causes coughing and a dripping nose.

- Hardship has difficulty breathing because of the thick liquid.
  - To get rid of the thick liquid, Hardship coughs, and his nose drips.
  - Coughing pushes the liquid out of the lungs and throat.
Respiratory Infection Defined (Picture 1.2)

Respiratory infections are a sickness of the nose, throat, and chest. These organs help the body to breathe.

Hardship has a respiratory infection. This sickness fills his nose, throat, and lungs with thick liquid.

The thick liquid causes coughing and a dripping nose.

Hardship has difficulty breathing because of the thick liquid.
Mild and Severe Respiratory Infections (Picture 1.3)

7. Show

What do you see in these pictures?

8. Explain

- Some respiratory infections are mild. Children with mild infections can be cared for at home.
  - Mary is breastfeeding Of Great Worth. She gives hot drinks and soft foods to help soothe the child’s throat.

- Some respiratory infections are severe. If the child is not taken to the clinic immediately, the child will die.
  - This child has fever. That’s a danger sign.
  - The mother does not take the child to the clinic.
  - She continues to work.
  - The child dies because he did not receive treatment.

- If you see a danger sign, the infection is severe. Go immediately to the clinic.
  - This mother knows fever is a danger sign.
  - She took the child to the clinic on the same day and received treatment.
  - The child got better and is healthy now.

What danger signs have we learned in previous lessons?
  - Unable to suck, swallow or drink
  - Child vomits every time he eats or drinks
  - Child does not respond when touched or spoken to
  - Convulsions
Mild and Severe Respiratory Infections (Picture 1.3)

Some respiratory infections are mild. Children with mild infections can be cared for at home.

Some respiratory infections are severe. If the child is not taken to the clinic immediately, the child will die.

If you see a danger sign, the infection is severe. Go immediately to the clinic.
Danger Signs of Severe Respiratory Infections (Picture 1.4)

9. Show
? What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain

- When you see signs of severe infection, take the child immediately to the clinic.
  - Take the child on the same day that you see the sign.

- When the child breathes in, there is a harsh noise.
  - Listen to the child’s breathing when he is calm.
  - If you hear a noise when the child breathes out or is crying, this is not a danger sign.

- The child is breathing faster than normal. The lower chest goes in when the child breathes in. These are signs of pneumonia.
  - His breath is fast like a runner’s breath.
  - Normally when a child breathes in, the chest and stomach move out.

- Child coughs or has difficulty breathing for more than 30 days.

- Child has fever or any other childhood danger sign.

11. Activity: Chest In-drawing and the Breath Counter

12. Probe
13. Inform
14. Practice and Coaching
15. Request
16. Examine
When you signs of severe infection, take the child immediately to the clinic.

When the child breathes in, there is a harsh noise.

Child is breathing much faster than normal. Lower chest goes in when the child breathes in. These are signs of pneumonia.

Child coughs or has difficulty breathing for more than 30 days.

Child has fever or any other childhood danger sign.
Lesson 2: Treatment for Severe Respiratory Infections and Tuberculosis

Materials
1. Attendance Registers
2. Find out the cost of treatment for severe respiratory infections.*

1. Game: Simon Says

2. Attendance and Troubleshooting

3. Story: The Neighbor Asks for Treatment (Picture 2.1)

Ruth received medication at the clinic for Hardship’s breathing problems. He had pneumonia. After four days of treatment, Hardship is doing much better. Now Hardship’s chest does not go in when he inhales. A neighbor comes to visit. “You still have three pills and Hardship looks healthy,” the neighbor says. “My child has a cough. Can you share your pills with me?”

4. Ask

? Why does the neighbor want the medication?
? Should Ruth share Hardship’s treatment?
? The last time your child was sick, did you give all the medicine?

Let’s compare your thoughts with the messages on the following pages.
Ruth received medication at the clinic for Hardship’s breathing troubles. He had pneumonia.

After four days of treatment, Hardship is doing much better. “You still have three pills left and Hardship looks healthy,” the neighbor says. “My child has a cough. Can you share your pills with me?”
Treat Severe Infection Immediately (Picture 2.2)

9. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain

- Begin treatment for severe infection immediately.
  - Give treatment on the same day that you see the danger signs.
  - Mary gives Of Great Worth her first treatment before she leaves the health clinic.

- Give the treatment exactly the way the health worker explained.
  - The health worker is telling Mary to give Of Great Worth one pill, each morning for 10 days.
  - The black X’s represent the days she should give treatment.

- Even if the child looks better, continue giving treatment all the days recommended by the health worker.
  - The black X’s show the days Mary gave treatment.
  - Mary continues to give one pill each morning even if her child seems better.
  - Some respiratory infections require 10 days of treatment.
  - Some respiratory infections like tuberculosis require 6 months of treatment.

? Do you believe that medicine will cure this sickness? Why? How do you know?
Treat Severe Infection Immediately (Picture 2.2)

Begin treatment for severe infection immediately.

Give the treatment exactly the way the health worker explains.

Even if the child looks better, continue giving treatment all the days recommended by the health worker.
Give all the Medicine (Picture 2.3)

9. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain

- Give all the medicine recommended by the health worker. Full treatment chases the sickness far away.
  - Sickness is like a thief that steals health from a child.
  - Giving all the medicine is like a man chasing a thief far away from the community.

- Do not share your child’s treatment with others. Sickness, like a thief, will come back quickly.
  - This mother is sharing her child’s treatment with a friend.
  - The sickness will return quickly to both children.
  - Do not share of give only half of a child’s treatment.

- If the child’s health does not improve, return to the clinic.
  - In the pictures, the mother gave all the medicine.
  - The child still had a cough and symptoms of respiratory infection.
  - The mother returned to the clinic.

? Is it important for caregivers to treat childhood illness? Why?

- A caregiver is able to prevent death by giving treatment.
- Simple practices can save the child’s life and allow them to live into old age.
- Each child is different from all others.
- Your child is unique and valuable.
Give all the medicine recommended by the health worker. Full treatment chases the sickness far away.

Do not share the treatment with others. Sickness, like a thief, will come back quickly.

If the child’s health does not improve, return quickly to the clinic.
Severe Respiratory Infection: Tuberculosis (Picture 2.4)

9. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain

- Tuberculosis is a severe respiratory infection for adults. It is very contagious.
  - Mary’s husband is coughing on his son.
  - Children usually get TB from a sick adult in their house.

- If someone in your house has tuberculosis, take everyone to the clinic to be tested.
  - Mary has taken everyone to the clinic for a TB test.
  - A person can have tuberculosis, without showing signs of sickness.

- In adults, the dangers signs are a cough for more than three weeks, coughing up blood, fever, and sudden weight loss.
  - Mary’s husband has fever and sweats at night.
  - He has lost a lot of weight in three weeks.

- In children, the danger signs are loss of interest in feeding, fever, and sudden weight loss.
  - This infant has tuberculosis. He doesn’t breastfeed as he used to. He has lost a lot of weight in a few weeks.

11. Activity: Saving Money for Treatment

12. Probe

13. Inform

14. Practice and Coaching

15. Request

16. Examine
Severe Respiratory Infection: Tuberculosis (Picture 2.4)

Tuberculosis is a severe infection for adults. It is very contagious.

If someone in your house has TB, take everyone to the clinic to be tested.

In adults, the dangers signs are a cough for more than three weeks, coughing up blood, fever, and sudden weight loss.

In children, the danger signs are loss of interest in feeding, fever, and sudden weight loss.
Lesson 3: Recovery and Care for Children with Respiratory Infection

Materials
1. Attendance Registers
2. Two oranges, balls of fabric, or balls of twine for the game.
3. Foods and cooking supplies for the Recovery Porridge. Ask each woman to bring a small bowl and spoon for her child.*

1. Game: Ball under Chin

2. Attendance and Troubleshooting

3. Story: Special Care at Home (Picture 3.1)

Ruth is giving Hardship medicine like the health worker suggested. Hardship is improving slowly. Mary comes to visit Ruth to find out how Hardship is doing. Mary asks, “What are you doing to help Hardship’s cough?” Are you giving Hardship special foods to help him recover? Ruth says that she is giving medicine. Why should I give special treatment if I am giving medicine?

4. Ask

? Is Ruth giving her child special care?
? If the child is taking medication, do you need to give the child special care?
? What special care do you give to a child at home to help them recover?

Let’s compare your thoughts with the messages on the following pages.
Story: Special Care at Home (Picture 3.1)

Ruth is giving Hardship medicine like the health worker suggested. She tells Mary about her treatment calendar.

What are you doing to help Hardship’s cough?

Mary asks, “Are you giving Hardship special foods to recover?”
Helping the Child Breathe (Picture 3.2)

5. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

6. Explain

- Clean each nostril with a warm cloth to help the child breath.
  - Mary is using the corner of a cloth to clean her child’s nose.
  - Then she washes her hands and the cloth with soap and water.

- Loosen snot by helping the child breath hot water steam.
  - Wet, warm air helps to loosen the thick liquid in the nose and chest.
  - The cloth helps to hold the steam.
  - Father A is sitting with the child to make sure the steam is not too hot.

- Give warm liquids to children six months and older.
  - Warm liquids loosen the thick liquid in the nose and chest and ease coughing.
  - Extra liquids help to make snot thinner.

- Breastfeed and offer more liquids than usual.
  - Drinking more liquids helps to thin the thick liquid in the nose and throat.
  - Give back liquids that are lost through coughing and dripping nose.
Helping the Child Breathe (Picture 3.2)

Clean each nostril with a warm cloth to help the child breathe.

Loosen snot by helping the child breath hot water steam.

Give warm liquids to loosen snot and ease coughing.

Breastfeed and offer more liquids than usual.
Feeding Guidelines for Recovery (Picture 3.3)

7. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

8. Explain

• Add small amounts of Vitamin A foods to meals each day.
  o Add organ meat, red meat, fish, sweet potato, and papaya, plantain, pumpkin, peas, carrots, and red palm oil.
  o These foods have vitamin A and will help the child get better.

• Offer sick children favorite foods and soft foods.
  o Soft foods are easy for children to swallow.
  o Eating favorite foods will encourage the child to eat.

• Offer extra foods to the child each day when the child is sick.
  o Chase the illness far away.
  o If caregivers give less food than normal, the sickness will return.
  o If the child has trouble eating solid foods, give them thick soups and porridges to help them recover.

• Offer extra foods and liquids for two weeks after the sickness is gone.
  o Strengthen the child’s body with healthy foods.
  o For infants less than six months, offer one or two extra breast milk feeds each day during the sickness and for two weeks after the illness.
  o The red X’s show that Mary has given extra foods for two weeks after the sickness ended.
Feeding Guidelines for Recovery (Picture 3.3)

Add small amounts of Vitamin A foods to meals each day.

Offer sick children favorite foods and soft foods.

Offer extra foods and liquids each day while the child is sick.

Offer extra foods and liquids for two weeks after the sickness is gone.
Helping the Body Recover (Picture 3.4)

9. Show

What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain:

- Keep the child warm, especially when it is cold outside.
  - Children heal better if they are warm and comfortable.
  - Do not overdress the child so they sweat.

- Let the child sleep more often when they are sick. Sleeping with the head and chest raised may help the child breathe.
  - Sleep helps the body recover.

- If the child has fever, cool down the body by wrapping the child in a wet cloth.
  - If fever stays too long, the child may have convulsions.
  - Cooling down the body prevents convulsions.
  - A mother can also pour cool water on a towel placed around their head of the child or give them a cold bath.

What if your child is a girl? Would you still give them special care?

- Yes! All children are unique and valuable whether they are girls or boys.
- Simple practices can protect them from sickness and death. Simple practices can keep them alive.

11. Activity – Recovery Porridge

12. Probe
13. Inform
14. Practice and Coaching
15. Request
16. Examine
Helping the Body Recover (Picture 3.4)

Keep the child warm, especially when it is cold outside.

Let the child sleep more often. Sleeping with head and neck raised may help the child breathe.

If the child has fever, cool down the child by wrapping the child in a wet cloth.
Lesson 4: Respiratory Infection Transmission and Prevention: Hand washing and Separating the Sick

Materials:
1. Attendance Registers

1. Game: Germs and Vaccinations

2. Attendance and Troubleshooting

3. Story: Ruth’s Husband and the Children get Sick (Picture 4.1)

Hardship recovered well, but soon Ruth’s husband and the children begin to cough. Their noses begin to drip. Ruth is surprised. She has spent lots of time helping Hardship recover. Now three more people have respiratory infections. How did this happen?

4. Ask

? How does someone “catch” respiratory infection?

? Could Ruth have prevented the others from getting sick? How?

? How do you prevent sick children from spreading infection in your house?

Let’s compare your thoughts with the messages on the following pages.
Soon Ruth’s husband and the children begin to cough. Their noses begin to drip. Ruth is surprised. She has spent lots of time helping Hardship recover. Now three more people have respiratory infections. How did this happen?
Respiratory Infection Transmission (Picture 4.2)

7. Show

What do you see in these pictures?

8. Explain

- Germs from a sick person’s snot and saliva spread infection.
  - The green dots in this picture are germs.
  - Germs are too small to see.
  - A sick child’s saliva and snot are filled with germs.

- Germs in the air from coughs spread infection.
  - Hardship is coughing on his sister.
  - His sister breathes in the germs and soon she becomes sick too.

- Germs on hands and objects of sick children spread infection.
  - Hardship’s snot gets onto his toys.
  - His sister’s hands now have his germs on them.
  - When his sister touches her mouth, eyes or wipes her nose the germs get into her body.
  - Soon his sister will be sick too.

- Smoke also causes respiratory infection in children.
  - Smoke irritates the nose and throat.
  - Children who breathe smoke from cooking fires have more respiratory infections.
  - Children who breathe tobacco smoke have more respiratory infections.
Germs from a sick person’s snot and saliva spread infection.

Germs in the air from coughs spread infection.

Germs on hands and objects of sick children spread infection.

Smoke also causes respiratory infection in children.
Stop Germs with Soap (Picture 4.3)

5. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

6. Explain

- Wash germs off hands after caring for a sick child.
  - Mary washes her hands after Of Great Worth coughs on her.
  - She washes her hands after wiping the child's nose.
  - Soap (and ash) kills the germs.

- Wash germs off toys and objects touched by a sick child.
  - Mary is washing the toy.
  - She is washing off Of Great Worth's germs and snot before giving the toy to another child.

- Wash snot off the hands and faces of sick children.
  - Mary is washing the snot and germs off Of Great Worth’s face and hands.
  - Clean hands and faces of sick children often.

- Keep germs out of the air. Teach sick children to cough in their elbow or on a cloth.
  - Mary taught her son to cough in his elbow.
  - This keeps germs out of the air.
  - Mary is using a cloth to catch the germs from Of Great Worth.
Stop Germs with Soap (Picture 4.3)

Wash germs off hands after caring for a sick child.

Wash germs off toys and objects touched by a sick child.

Wash snot off the hands and faces of sick children.

Keep germs out of the air. Teach sick children to cough in their elbow or on a cloth.
Separate Sick Children to Stop Germs (Picture 4.4)

9. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

10. Explain

- Give sick children a separate sleeping mat.
  - Of Great Worth sleeps in a separate bed.
  - Germs in the air from a sick person can infect others in the bed.

- Give sick children their own bowl of food to prevent others from getting sick.
  - Germs on fingers and hands stick to food and can cause infection in others.
  - If a sick person coughs on your food, their germs on the food may make you sick too.

- Discourage healthy children from playing with sick children.
  - Germs on toys and hands can spread germs.
  - Mary doesn’t let others play with Of Great Worth when she is sick.
  - She doesn’t want to spread her germs to other children.

? Do you believe these practices will work to stop infection? Why?

11. Activity: The Germ Song
Give sick children a separate sleeping mat to prevent others from getting sick.

Give sick children their own bowl of food to prevent others from getting sick.

Discourage healthy children from playing with sick children.
Lesson 5: Preventing New Respiratory Infections: Exclusive Breastfeeding, Vaccinations, Healthy Feeding, and Reducing Indoor Smoke

Materials:
1. Attendance Registers
2. Two cooking rooms for the activity*

1. Game: Transmission Game

2. Attendance and Troubleshooting

3. Story: A Tree planted by a Stream (Picture 5.1)

Mary tells a story. There is a tree planted by a stream. Its roots drink from the stream. The stream and soil provide healthy foods for the tree. The tree always has fruit and green leaves.

The tree by the stream does not break or become sick when strong winds blow. The tree remains strong. “Hardship can be strong like this tree,” says Mary. “Every child can be strong if planted like this tree.” “How?” asks Ruth.

4. Ask

? Why does the tree keep its leaves and not break when the winds blow?

? What did Mary mean when she said Hardship could be like a tree?

? What are actions we can take to help our children be like a strong tree and resist infections?

Let’s compare your thoughts with the messages on the following pages.
Mary tells a story of a tree planted by a stream. Its roots drink from the stream. The stream provides healthy food and nutrients for the tree. A tree planted by a stream always has fruit and green leaves.

A tree by the stream does not break or become sick when strong winds blow.

“Hardship can be strong like this tree” says Mary. “How?” asks Ruth?
Breastfeed and Vaccinate to Keep the Body Strong (Picture 5.2)

5. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

6. Explain

- Give only breastmilk for the first six months of the infant’s life.
  - Breastmilk gives the body all the food that it needs in the first six months.
  - Breastmilk protects your child from infections.
  - This child is healthy and fat because his mother gave only breastmilk for six months.

- Exclusively breastfed infants (5 months and younger) are sick less often than children (5 months and younger) who eat and drink other foods and liquids.
  - This child had porridge and water.
  - He is thin and had many illnesses during the first six months of life.

- Vaccinate your children to prevent severe respiratory infections.
  - Vaccinations prevent severe respiratory infection that may cause death (tuberculosis, whopping cough, and measles).
  - Vaccinations help to keep a child strong.

- Breastmilk is like the stream that feeds the body with nutrients. Vaccinations protect the tree from strong winds.
  - Children are valuable and their lives are of great worth.
  - Giving breastmilk and vaccinations help to protect children from harm.
Breastfeed and Vaccinate to Prevent new Respiratory Infections  
(Picture 5.2)

Give only breast milk for the first six months of an infant’s life.

Vaccinate children to prevent severe respiratory infections.

Breastmilk is like the stream that feeds the body with nutrients. Vaccinations protect the tree from strong winds.

Exclusively breastfed infants (5 months and younger) are sick less often than children (5 months and younger) who eat and drink other foods and liquids.
Healthy Feeding prevents Respiratory Infection (Picture 5.3)

7. Show

? What do you see in these pictures?

8. Explain

- Add a variety of foods each day to prevent infection.
  - Of Great Worth eats foods with Vitamin A. She eats mango, papaya, orange sweet potato, carrots and dark green leafy vegetables.
  - She eats foods with iron, like legumes, organ meat, and dark green leafy vegetables.
  - She eats foods with vitamin C, like oranges, lemons, jackfruit, tomatoes, okra, avocado, papaya and mango.
  - Of Great Worth eats foods with protein, like beans, lentils, nuts, split peas, eggs, meat, chicken and fish.
  - Her mother a sprinkle of iodized salt and a spoonful of oils to her foods.

- Children who eat well get sick less often.
  - Of Great Worth has been sick five days in the last three months.
  - Hardship has been sick 14 days in the last three months.
  - Of Great Worth eats better and gets sick less often.

- Children who don’t eat well are more likely to die from illness.
  - Hardship’s body is weak because he doesn’t eat a variety of foods.
  - He is more likely to die from respiratory infection than Of Great Worth.
Healthy Feeding prevents Respiratory Infection (Picture 5.3)

Foods with Vitamin A

Foods with iron

Foods with Vitamin C

Foods with Protein

Add a variety of foods to the local staple food (such as sorghum, manioc, corn or rice) each day to prevent infection.

Children who eat well get sick less often.

Children who don’t eat well are more likely to die from illness.
Reduce Indoor Smoke to prevent Respiratory Infections (Picture 5.4)

7. **Show**
   
   ? What do you see in these pictures?

8. **Explain**
   
   - Smoke prevents a tree from growing well. Likewise, smoke harms children who breathe it every day.
     - Smoke causes the leaves and fruit to wilt and fall off.
   
   - When cooking, open doors and windows to let out smoke. Add vents to let smoke out.
     - Mary has added long vents at the top of the wall to let the smoke out of the house.
     - Mary is cooking next to the window.
   
   - Discourage children from sitting in cooking rooms.
     - Mary has asked her children to watch Of Great Worth while she is cooking.
     - She has given them work to do outside.

   - Smoke in the open air. Keep small children away.
     - Do not smoke in rooms where children play or sleep.
     - The smoke stays in clothes, bedding and the walls.
     - The old smoke in the room can cause respiratory infection.

11. **Activity: Visiting Cooking Rooms**

12. **Probe**

13. **Inform**

14. **Practice and Coaching**

15. **Request**

16. **Examine**
Reduce Indoor Smoke to prevent Respiratory Infections (Picture 5.4)

Smoke prevents a tree from growing well. Likewise, smoke harms children who breathe it every day.

When cooking, open doors and windows. Add vents to let out smoke.

Discourage children from sitting in cooking rooms.

Smoke in the open air. Keep small children away.