



The First 1000 Days



1 - What is exceptional care?

Exceptional care is making sure babies get the best possible care, most importantly free from harm. Child care workers are there to provide love, care and relationships with babies. Keeping babies safe, happy and at peace shows good caring towards the child. Maslow's hierarchy of needs supports exceptional care. Maslow has created a triangle of needs which shows that it is important that babies' safety needs are important such as personal security and health, also physiological needs such as air, water and food. As carers this should be provided at all times, if babies do not get this care it could have a negative impact on the child's development. (SimplyPsychology)

Why is exceptional care important?

Giving babies the best possible care will change their whole life, especially if they are getting this care in the first 1000 days, it opens up so many opportunities for babies while they grow. Most importantly, if a child comes from a disadvantaged home and as carers the child is getting the best care this will boost their confidence and show the child that they are cared for and loved for. By having exceptional care, it helps the brain develop in a positive way. It is said that if a baby has the best care at a young age it will give the child the best start in life, it will also improve their social, emotional development as the child grows up. (banditd.org.uk)

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, believes that the environment you are in changes you. This theory reemphasises having good exceptional care is so important to a child's development. Bronfenbrenner's theory shows that the environment that people are grown up in shapes how they will be as a person, for example, if a baby is born into a loving, caring, nurturing environment the baby knows that it is safe and will grow up to know what it is like to have a positive and happy life growing up.

However, if a child is brought up in a negative house hold where there is not much love or care it is possible that their development will be delayed. (SCU.EDU)

[Brain development in children](#)

Current Challenges



What are the current challenges that practitioners have to overcome when caring for young babies in an early years setting?

Children go through different stages of life at different times, for example babies start walking, communicating and interacting all at different times. Which means this can be difficult for practitioners

to be able to give children different things that they need. Children are brought up in different ways too, some children are born into an affectionate, loving, kind family and others are born into a neglected not so loving family, which means children will find it hard to develop mentally. This can be challenging for practitioners as children will not be used to the professional love which will be given to them.

Anxiety is one of the biggest challenges within the early years as, some children feel anxious while leaving their parents in the morning and can get very emotional and worked up. If parents are anxious before dropping their child off, the child will be able to sense the anxiousness, will make it hard for the child to feel calm. It is hard as practitioners as sometimes it is difficult to be able to calm the child and let them know they are safe and secure. However, if a child takes awhile to settling in, this can make parents be stressed again about the situation. This is why it is important as practitioners, reassurance is given in a calm and collective way.

Another challenge is not having enough resources, as more and more children are coming into the setting it is very difficult to be able to put different activities out every day. If the setting is not getting any funding either, this can be another challenge as this is very time consuming when the funding will come through. By having this challenge it can cause stress within the room, which can lead to the children feeling very stressed too, this is why enough resources need to be given so everyone is relaxed and calm.

In the early years, more and more children are on the pathway for additional needs, this can be challenging within the setting as there may not be enough staff within the workplace for one to one help. This can be difficult for practitioners as they need to look after so many children, however, some children need more attention than others. If there are not enough staff, this leads to children not having the right attention and help they deserve and need to develop and grow in the best possible way. If we help these children within the first 1000 days, it gives them an amazing chance to grow and develop and glow differently in their own way.

Activity ideas



Here are some activities -

- Messy play
- Water play
- Sensory play
- Reading stories

- Dancing

What are the benefits from doing activities? How do they help with development within children?

It is so important that babies are given the opportunity to use all of their senses while doing activities, this will make the children used to using their, touch, taste, smell, hearing and eyesight. Children are developing their skills through play, such as, thinking, understanding, communicating and remembering through imagining. Fredrich Froebel believed that the things children do what they are younger shape their lives as they grow older. Froebel says how important it is for children to learn through play and how important nature is.

Sensory play is one of the most effective activates a baby can do. By doing sensory play it opens up the 5 senses but it also movement, balance and spatial. During the start of the first 1000 days a child's senses are not fully developed, as the first 1000 days go on, babies will explore the world around them and their senses will start to bloom and develop. Every single experience a baby goes through a different sense builds nerve connections in their brain. When babies are playing sensory play, they tend to put things in their mouths a lot, this is one of the best ways for a baby to properly feel and take in what they are playing with. By using water and sand babies can feel the different textures between their hands, and as practitioners if we are talking to babies while their are playing with these activities it will develop their language skills. By doing one small activity it can unlock lots of different senses for a baby!

Sigmud freud believed that experiences in our childhood shapes our personality as we grow up. This links to play as the more babies experience with these activities it will stick by them as they grow up. Freud has five psychosexual stages of development, the most important one for babies is the Oral stage which is the mouth which is swallowing and sucking , like I have mentioned above babies put things in their mouth to discover the taste and texture of the object which they have discovered.



The Curiosity Approach™

2 - The Curiosity Approach

What is the curiosity approach? This approach was created to give children some freedom by encouraging their curiosity and imagination. By using this approach it gives children the opportunity to think themselves and make choices by themselves.

When looking at the curiosity approach it is such as positive experience for children, especially babies as they are growing and developing so many skills. This approach is a fun way of learning! In today's society, parents tend to give babies an iPad or a phone to keep children occupied, this approach encourages parents to use the outdoors instead, let babies see the beautiful surroundings outside, let babies, feel, smell and look at the world around them.

What does the Curiosity approach look like? If this approach is used in settings, it will need to look colourful, by using loose parts this will attract babies to play with this activity. The resources usually used for babies is to play with wood, wood is used so that babies are able to create their own things such as building a tower and looking at the numbers on the blocks. This approach is a good approach for babies, as it gets the child's brain working and their confidence will grow, it can also put a child in a position where they are independent this will be new for the baby, but again their development and understanding will grow.

What are the benefits of this approach? One of the biggest benefits of this approach is less technology. If we are giving babies the opportunity to go outside and explore with different objects they will take this with them as they grow instead of having their head stuck into a device. It gives babies to make friends and interact with other babies too, this helps their emotional and social development to grow and develop the best way it should. Being able to interact with adults is also a bonus as this will develop babies speech as they will be listening to different words and sounds. By using this approach it will give babies a peaceful environment, there is no negativity for the child. As practitioners are making the room peaceful and homely, this will make it less difficult for the child to leave their parents at the start of the day as they will be familiar with the room and the staff.
(learning journals)

Johann Pestalozzi believed that the way for children to learn is through their head, heart and hands. He visited different schools which were homelike and saw that practitioners were using sensory activities for children to learn and develop. He noticed while doing this children were mentally and physically independent. Pestalozzi has said that for children to learn in the best way they need a secure, loving environment. Pestalozzi believes that the outdoors and these activities are so important to a baby's life. Everything a baby does within the first 1000 days will create their future. (Sate University)

[The Curiosity Approach](#)

Environments



How is the environment important? Babies are one of the most precious little human's in the world, and they deserve the best environment. It is so important that babies are around positive, happy environments. When thinking about the environment, it is not just indoor and outdoor, emotional feelings come into this. When a baby is given a secure happy environment it promotes healthy mental health, and this will help with development.

If we are giving babies the option for indoor and outdoor play, it gives a variety of options which can be interesting and a positive place for the baby to relax and enjoy but also let their development grow by using their physical and social skills. An environment should be magical for a baby as it will be easier for the child to come into the setting, which means too parents will be at ease while their child is coming into the setting.

Outdoor environments- There are so many ways a baby can develop when they are in an outdoor environment. By being outdoors it will allow children to ease into nature surroundings, babies will be able to touch and see the wonderful world which they live in such as grass, different coloured flowers and animals. There are different activities which can be taken place outside to encourage babies gross motor skills and making them stronger, such as walking, rolling around and picking things up. When babies are outdoors they are able to socialise with other babies and maybe start to copy each other as

they would be doing different things, this makes a loving caring environment. (monkeypuzzle day nursery)

Indoor environments- By having a comfortable, attractive environment it will have an imitate effect on a baby. While babies are in their setting, if the environment is loving and caring it can turn into the child's second home, the baby becomes comfortable and knows as soon as they come into the setting they know in their minds its a safe space for them to relax and be happy, which also gives the parents a positive attitude. While being inside practitioners can do different activities, such as a treasure basket. A treasure basket can be filled with natural objects which babies can look, touch and really evaluate what they are looking at. This means that babies have their own time to explore, in the same way, treasure baskets are amazing for children who have ALN as practitioners can create a box full of things that the child likes such as any sensory toys, or pictures that calm and soothes the child. (early years matters)

Emmi Pickler- Emmi Pickler strongly believed that babies should be free to move with nothing holding them back. Pickler wanted babies to learn what their own limits are, by doing this they are learning from their own experience. Emmi Pickler came up with her own approach to make what she believed babies reality, Pickler made sure that the environment the babies were in were safe, secure and full of love.

Here are some of Picklers principles -

- Build trust and relationships
- Doing things with the child and not to the child
- Full attention
- Babies are never to be put in a position which they cannot get into by themselves.

There are so many benefits to these principles that Pickler has created, Pickler wanted to make sure babies physical and psychic health were developing. While observing babies she was looking after she could see that children who were cared for and had a good environment were more calm, well developed physically, had great confidence and posture. Pickler wanted to promote independence within babies, her approach helped children with this.

[A day in the Pickler house](#)

Maria Montessori's approach is all about self-paced learning, Montessori believed that children are naturally curious and are able to learn independently. This theory is hands on learning, this is allowing children to discover new things to their own individual learning style, this links to environments. Montessori created an environment where children are free to move around and have a choice for their own activities, this would allow children to learn at their own pace and do things that they know they enjoy. By babies being independent it will help them to be more engaged and motivated, which helps them develop their problem solving and critical thinking. Environment is so important in the first 1000 days as these are the first places they will see, this is why as practitioners we need to make it as positive and as magical as we can. (Maria Montessori 1929)

Being Inclusive



Why is being inclusive important? By being inclusive this helps children who are at risk of inequality and discrimination or who have been through it. It will help children be confident in who they are and who they aspire to be as they grow up. In the early years setting it is important that children are given a secure and safe environment, by doing this staff, parents and children will feel calm and relaxed and together children can learn the similarities and differences within everyone. This will let children value each other. (eyalliance.org)

Are there any challenges? In early years settings some staff members might find it difficult to understand and are nervous with new things, training is very important to have on equality and diversity. By having this understanding it will make staff members less stressed. However, if the setting is not able to get the correct training, this can be a challenge towards staff members.

Another challenge could be that not all staff members are being equal or diverse to the children. This could be very serious and could cause a lot of upset and disrespect. It is so important that staff members speak up if this is happening, as everyone should be treated with love, care and respect.

Within the first 1000 days, it is so important that babies are aware that being kind to others is key, also being inclusive should be taken seriously. As babies develop it is important as practitioners babies are shown this straight away, because they will grow up knowing what is right and wrong. Children need to know they are valued and loved.

Professional Love



Professional love is when you have a close, loving and affectionate bond with children. This is built in a person or not.

Why is love important? Giving babies the love and affection they need for children's brains to develop in the healthiest way. It is important we take into account children's feelings and how they feel about themselves, their confidence and how they cope with stress all depends on how we as practitioners respond to them. As practitioners, if we are showing babies a warm, loving, affectionate relationship babies are going to feel much more safe and secure within the setting. By babies feeling this security, this creates a bond and a relationship with a child and a person. If practitioners are showing professional love and creating these bonds with babies, it is likely babies will explore more, which is then helping the baby develop.

One of the ways of showing professional love is through lots of cuddles, giggles and positivity!

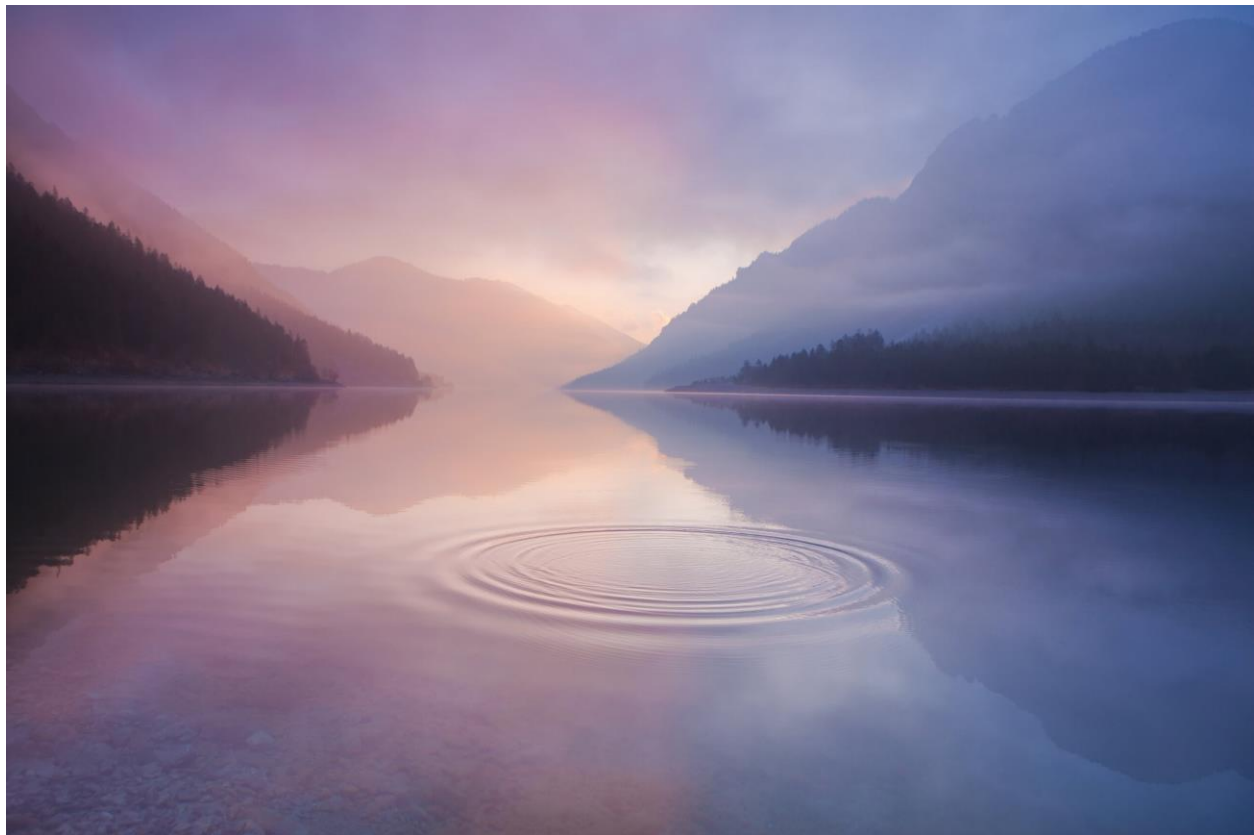
- The child will feel relaxed
- Make the child feel more confident
- Helping babies know how to deal with problems and stress as they grow older
- Making the relationship as strong as it can be!

How can practitioners show professional love? As practitioners it is important that we are making enough time to play with the babies. By having this one to one contact it is making babies feel special and the baby is aware all attention is on them. 'Your time and attention is more important than expensive toys' (gov.uk). When doing daily activities such as meal times, nappy changing and dressing, here are the key times to connect with children. While doing these activities practitioners can talk to the child, giggle with them, give cuddles and explain exactly what is going on, by doing this it is not just showing love it is helping babies develop their language and understanding of the world. This is special time together, and babies will start recognising that their company is valued. (gov.uk - parenting, give it time)

Maslow- Maslow's Hierarchy of needs believes in professional love. Maslow has believed that children deserved to be shown love and affection. He has said that babies need emotional relationships as it drives human behaviour. These relationships are needed to be with parents, carers, practitioners and friendships. (verywellmind.com)

Professional love is so important within the first 1000 days as we show babies at a young age what they should be getting throughout their life time, and giving this love is amazing for babies but also amazing for the adults who are showing the love.

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