



first 1000 days

The first 1,000 days refers to a child's life from the moment they are conceived until they reach 2 years of age. A baby's experiences in their first 1,000 days of life can cause lifelong effects on their health and wellbeing. Each day of this journey is special and influences the way children develop, grow and learn. During the first 1000 is when the brain grows the fastest, faster than any other time in our life, research shows that children's brains are 80% developed, making those first 2 years have a lifelong impact on health, learning and success. The first 1000 days are also a crucial period for communication development and physical skills. When a baby turns two they should usually be able to say more than 50 words, walk unaided, count to 10, jump and climb furniture, She/he may be able to sort shapes and colours and may even show an interest in potty training. . Children will only be able to achieve these goals with the encouragement and support from parents and caregivers. Children also need to be monitored during these times to monitor delays in development. If development delays are not identified early on they could cause problems later on in life. having early diagnosis can improve in the long term and give parents and caregivers the support they need to support their child. The first 1000 days are not only crucial for development but also the time babies are at their most vulnerable. During the first 1000 days a baby will need safety and security, healthy food, loving relationships, a healthy environment and time to play.

<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/child-development/your-toddlers-developmental-milestones-2-years>

During pregnancy the mothers health, nutrition and stress levels can have an impact on your baby's future. A healthy pregnancy sets the baby up for a healthy life. Health care during pregnancy is called prenatal care. This can support the mother to have a healthy baby and It reduces the risk of a baby being born too early which can lead to health problems. The mental and well being of a mother also has an impact on the baby's development. There are many steps mums can take to have a healthy pregnancy such as not smoking or drinking alcohol, eating healthy and staying physically active.

Activity ideas



Loose parts play

Loose parts play helps babies develop creative thinking. Babies playing with loose parts will help them develop across the whole curriculum. When playing with loose parts it promotes babies to think “what if” this encourages babies to use their imagination and come up with different ways they could use the object, this thinking leads to problem solving and is a way of babies seeing solutions. Children often take loose parts and turn them into creative, imaginative, open-ended play. Loose parts play also promotes language development, it encourages children to use their props and storytell to adults, describing the possibilities the item can be. For example if a child picks up a stick the stick will become anything the child wants it to be. Playing with loose parts can also help develop motor skills, the smaller objects will help develop fine motor skills while the larger objects will develop gross motor skills.

Messy sensory play

From birth to early childhood, children use their five senses to explore the world around them. It is important to allow children to use these senses as they try to make sense of the world around them. Messy sensory play gives children the chance to explore a range of sensory experiences, by giving children the chance to explore how things feel, smell, taste and sound it gives them an awareness and understanding of the world around them. Messy play such as slime, sand and paint gives children the opportunity to feel different textures and materials. Sensory play supports children to develop in many ways such as, language development, cognitive growth, fine and gross motor skills and supports language development. Sensory play builds nerve connections in the brain and encourages development. Messy play should be introduced when babies start to get interested in touching and feeling things around them.

Water play

Water play can be a calming activity for children. Water play has many benefits to it, it gives opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills and eye-hand coordination skills. Through actions like pouring, stirring, spraying and scrubbing. Water play can provide hours of fun. Pouring, splashing, stirring the water develops creativity and imagination for the children. Water play whether indoors or out can develop many things like enhancing physical skills, promoting social learning, promoting good health and well being and promoting solving skills. Water play isn't just a fun activity for the children, it offers opportunities for children to learn about the outdoor environment. This is why it is important for us to encourage children to go outdoors to play no matter the weather because it is a fun and engaging activity for the children. While playing outdoors there are many things children can explore during water play such as, what objects sink or float and how the water moves.

Reading stories together and singing

Reading stories to children has many benefits to it, children may start showing an interest in books at around 6 months by grabbing, chewing them or just playing with them. Books encourage children to point and touch objects in the book. This helps develop baby's thinking skills and encourages them to start engaging. Reading books can help develop language skills because the baby may start copying the sounds and words you're saying while reading, it will also help babies recognize pictures and start putting names to things. Reading to babies also introduces numbers, letters, colours and shapes in a fun way and can also start giving babies information about the world around them. Reading regularly from a young age stimulates patterns of brain development which builds language literacy and social-emotional skills that will have many health benefits.

Singing also has many benefits to babies development, while singing to a baby they bond with your voice and feel safe when they are with you. Singing regularly to a baby can also help them become more familiar with your voice. Singing can also settle a baby when they are feeling upset or is even a good thing to do when a baby is happily awake in the day as it's the perfect thing to do to keep them happy. Singing to babies also gives them the chance to use new words and sounds in a fun way. Another benefit of singing to children is you can personalise a song to have the baby's name in it and this gives them the chance to start learning their own name if the song is sung regularly. Singing is also a good way to develop listening skills, singing is a way to get your baby's attention and to keep them focused and teach them how to listen while another person is talking and this will have a positive impact on them in the future.

environments



Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting children's development, a positive environment encourages holistic development. When children feel safe and secure they grow the confidence to go explore the new environment they are in. When the environment is a safe and secure place it encourages babies to play and explore because they feel relaxed and comfortable. It is also important that the environment is a clean, safe and stimulating environment. A nurturing and responsive environment is important for the development of infants and toddlers, a positive environment can also support children with challenging behaviours. An early years setting also needs to have a variety of activities for children to play and learn with, this will give children the opportunity to develop their skills further. The setting needs to have activities to suit all learning styles and also need to have activities that will challenge the children. The activities need to be something that the children will be interested in doing so it is important we work with the children to see what they all enjoy playing with. Having a prepared environment is also important because it empowers the child. It provides the child with the opportunity to freely access things in the setting and it develops a sense of order so that they know everything has a place. It also provides a safe place to explore and develop independence. We are also in control of the environment and this is how we are going to get children to engage in an activity through setting an activity up and waiting for a child to go over in their own time to engage with the activity and soon all the children will want to start playing with the activity.

Being inclusive



it is important to be inclusive in early childhood settings due to it being the child's first relationship outside of their family relationships it is important for us to make sure it is a positive experience for the children because if not it can have a impact on further relationships the child creates and can cause problems like anxiety trust issues or the child may not want to make any more relationships if they've had a negative experience before this is why it is important for us to treat each child equally. There are many ways we can be inclusive like being aware of triggers (rooms are too loud, lighting is too bright, overstimulation). Having a routine, having alternative activities for the children that may struggle with some activities or children that need to be challenged more, or even to meet the children's interests more. Focusing on students strengths, praise them for their small milestones. Allowing children to work in groups. Give the children breaks when you feel they need one. And getting to know all of the students equally. Doing all of this will also help develop the child's confidence because they will feel more calm and welcome into the setting.

professional partnership/ relationships



When working in a childhood setting it is important to be professional with everyone you interact with. Childcare workers need to be friendly not only with other members of staff but also with parents and carers of the children in their setting. Childcare workers also need to have a clear understanding of the responsibility of their job title. It is important for practitioners to work together in the setting and with other professionals to support the development of the children. When working together it enables us to break down barriers and come up with solutions to problems quicker. Working together in the setting will provide a good service to the families. Positive relationships are important in the early years because it allows the child and family members to feel like they can come to you when they are having any troubles or any questions. It makes the children feel like they can trust you and can promote physical, mental and emotional well being. To build a relationship with other practitioners it is important to listen to the ideas of others, listen carefully and be aware of confidentiality while having discussions inside and outside of the setting. In the early years setting it is crucial to love and care for the children in our setting, this is called "professional love". Professional love is not a replacement from the love the children get from their parents at home but is a substitute it provides the love and emotional warmth children need when they are away from their parents. They may need a cuddle after falling over or just a cuddle in general but that is what professional love is all about, making sure the child still feels like they have the love they get at home but in their nursery setting.

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