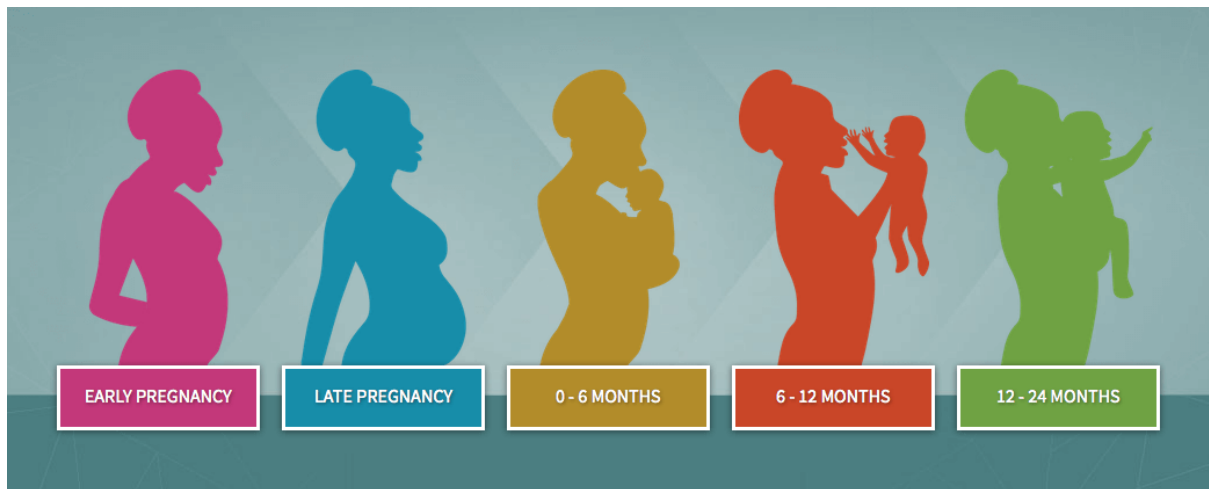




The first 1000 days. Exceptional care

Aleisha Johnson - 2200646

The first 1000 days starts from the day of conception to the ages of 2 years old. These are the most crucial days of a child's development.

The positive and negative experiences in the first 1000 days in a child life can have a life long effect on their physical and intellectual development.

The European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (efcni) states that environmental factors and good nutrition during this time period has a positive effect on a babies, growth, brain development, digestive tract, metabolism and immune system. they also state that a balance diet is key during the early stages of a infants life.

Save the children 2016 also states that children brain develops rapidly by a combination of environment, genes and experiences and the brain is particularly sensitive in the early years. They have also shown by experience and science experiments that as the brain becomes older it becomes harder to maintain and hold information as it would with a young infant/ child.

By the ages of one, the size of the infants brain is around 72% of a adults brain and by 2 it has grown to 83% (save the children, Knickmeyer *et.al.* 2008)

Exceptional care is also important in the first 1000 days. It should focus on the quality of care, safety and security of the child, it also applies to the mothers. 270/1000 days include the pregnancy, the care of the mother during her pregnancy can have a effect on the fetus's development.

Current challenges



Save the children 2016 explains that the government needs to do more to invest in good-quality childcare to support every child's development. Every child and parent should have support and access to good-quality development.

Funding is one current challenge for non maintained setting, these are private or a playgroups that are not for profit and are run off charitable organisations. (hackneylocaloffer)

The lack of funding is one current challenge for non maintained setting during the economic crisis. The lack of funding could have a missive impact on equipment/ resources for babies. Each setting should have age appropriate resources, babies tend to put different toys/objects in their mouths, not having the correct resources can be harmful for the children. Childcare 2019 has a section on toy safety for children. One of the common hazard that Childcare 2019 talks about is small toys, any toys with small parts that can be removed is not suitable for any young child/ baby, these parts can be swollen by any young child and become a big chocking hazard. The lack of recourses due to funding can also have a impact on the child's development as toys and play plays a part in every child's development.

Another current challenge that many setting have faced in Covid-19. As UCL 2021 states that the first few years of a babies life are vital for their health. Many babies only interacted with their parents during this time, UCL says it has affected babies language, cognitive, emotional and social development.

Babies need stimulation, contact and responsive caregiving, all this was affect by covid, the support system for parents was no long due to the pandemic. Many stressed parents did not get a break which led to parents getting frustrated and not reacting to the children's needs and according to UCL this can slow down a babies brain development.

Many Babies that were born in the pandemic that went into a early years setting when able to where less developed in many different ages, this was a challenge for many setting, many setting had to change as the children coming into the setting were behind in their development. This was a challenge as setting had to identify the delays and put interventions into place for many children at once. (teachearlyyears)

Activity ideas





1 - painting on ice/water



Hair gel Sensory bags



3 - hair gel sensory bags



4 - edible sand play

Educational playcare explains that play is not just for fun, they see play and activities as development. From birth children use their senses, which are touch, taste, smell, seeing, moving and hearing. Montessori's play theory describes play as work for children. her theory states that play can help children make good choices, practise, actions and tasks. Montessori observed children at school which lead to her theory that children respond best to play based activities that used real life objects when given the chance to free time. she noticed that children who had more independence become self-motivated.

Educational playcare states that the research they have done shows that sensory play builds up a child's/ infant's brain pathways, leading to the child being able to achieve more complex learning tasks.

[montessori](#)

Benefits of each activity

Painting on ice/water-

painting on ice or water is different to painting on paper. The paints will mix easier and create different patterns. By placing paper over the top of the painted ice will allow the child to keep what they have done.

The benefits to this activity are that children can see what colours they can make when mixing two or more colours together, during this the adult can teach the child about creating new colours with two different colours and the colour wheel. Fine motor skills are being developed during this time. being able to hold a paintbrush is promoting this development.

if the child is a little older adding in how the ice was made, teaching them about freezing water as they are painting can add a different element to their intellectual development. (7daysofplay 2021)

Sensory baskets -

sensory baskets can have any objects in them depending on the aim of the activity. Colour theme baskets to learn about different colours, different shaped objects to learn about shapes or different objects in the basket to learn about different textures, shapes or sounds.

The curiosity approach talks about sensory baskets, they suggest having no bought toys in the basket and creating baskets from everyday / loose objects such as, wooden spoons, paint brushes, wooden rings, cardboard(toilet roll), Christmas decorations and many more objects. this allows the child to use their own imagination and explore the the object in many different ways, this promotes imaginative play. Having all different shapes, sizes and colours in the basket the child will be using any of their different senses. Allowing the child to explore the basket and asking them to describe what they have found will develop their language skills. According to the supermom 2019 it is also beneficial to young children for developing their social skills as they may share or show what they have in their baskets to other children

Hair gel sensory -

Hair gel sensory bags are, zip lock bag filled with hair gel with either paint, glitter, food colouring, pom poms, letters, or small animals. the child can either play with the bag on the floor or when it is tapped to the window to be able to see the colours or objects better.

Children's fine motor skills are being developed during this activity as they will be using their fingers and hands to move or move the objects in the gel. Kidactivities states that it also helps with problem solving skills as they are figuring out how to move the objects in the gel.

Edible sand -

Edible sand can be used by ground up cereal, biscuits and cookies making it suitable for all ages as infants/ babies like to explore objects with their mouths. Putting different objects in the sand such as a sieve, cars, different size spoons or allowing the child to pick what goes into the sand, promoting creating play and also more independence/ their own choice in their play.

They can develop an understanding of different objects, some objects may hold the sand and some may not like the sieve. this will build their cognitive/ intellectual development. it also build their motor skills by picking up small - large objects in the sand (empoweredparents) using their fine motor skills by digging the sand with their fingers and hands. Empoweredparents also say that children playing in sand develops hand-eye coordination, children need hand-eye coordination when building or creating new shapes in the sand.

environment



Earlyyears alliance describes an enabling environment as a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment for children to grow and develop. A enabling environment should have fun hands-on experiences for each child whether that's indoor or outdoor environment.

According to the welsh government enabling environments should have multi-sensory experiences to allow to the child to experience more opportunities to respond to and to allow the child use their imagination to inspire others to be more creative. This encourages children's creativity and critical thinking.

Having a positive environment for the children does not just help with their development, learningjournals tells us that it should provide a home-from-home feeling for the child. This allows the child to feel safe and comfortable in the environment that they are in. When a child feels clam and relaxed they are more likely to go and play and interact more with others around them. The environment that the child is in should have many resources of the child, many setting are moving away from toys and going towards loose parts, these can be colourful objects or materials that children can explore, change, move or stick together when playing, the object has no purpose which lets the child be creative and play with these as they want/chose to. (communityplaythings)

The curiosity approach explains that less is more for children. Having less toys and more loose parts and allow the child to built what they like with these. This approach also says that when giving the child loose parts and asking them to build something then the child is no longer in a creative learning environment as the child is not in control of their own learning. Providing children with loose parts gives the child more creativity, independence and more control over their play and experience. Letting the child have the control and choice in what they do with the resources they have been given is more natural to the child when they are playing.

Being inclusive



Being inclusive is being able to create a sense of belonging for all children, parents and staff in the setting. Being inclusive means including every child of different race, religion, background and different abilities.

Ensuring that the practice, attitude and values in an early years setting are professional can create every child and person to feel comfortable and included. An inclusive setting that focuses on every child creates a better outcome for their development (Teach Early Years). One suggests that children being able to express themselves and be accepted had a big impact on the child's mental health and well-being.

The EYF states that every child is unique and is celebrated by not creating barriers in learning. There are any challenges that an early years setting may be a communication barrier between child and practitioner or practitioner and parent or not all practitioners may have a full knowledge on the religion.

Being able to overcome these barriers with the child and parent will ensure that everyone is being included in the setting.

professional partnerships/ relationships



Bronfenbrenner's child development theory shows that there can be any factors can have a massive impact on how a child develops. The theory also states that positive impact the parents have on the child can be reversed by any negative impact from their macrosystem and ecosystems.

This can be affected by partnerships and relationships that are not professional in a setting. Maintaining a professional relationship between parent and practitioner and child and practitioner to ensure that the child has the best and safe environment from home to school setting to ensure the child will have the best chance for learning and development. Developing a relationship with the parents is good for the child and comforting for the parents. If a infants perceives that their parents are at ease with their important adult, it may help them feel safe. For the infants parents to communicate with the practitioner and for the practitioner to voice any worries they might have about the child, any positive results, and the development of the child in their setting, there must be two-way communication between the parents and the practitioner. The child benefits from this since they are cooperating to value and encourage each other's contributions to their learning and growth. (parenta 2016).

Children may frequently turn to their parents for stability and support. A child will frequently spend the majority of their time with a key individual when they are in their setting. By developing a relationship with their key person, you can make sure that when they leave their carer and enter their setting, they feel comfortable, protected, and cared for. Due to the emphasis on the connection rather than the practitioner's function, Sally Thomas (positive relationships) refers to a key person as someone who provides key care.

One challenge that may occur is the relationship between practitioner and child, It is simpler to build bond in smaller settings because there are fewer children to form bonds with; however, it can be

challenging in larger groups because it is easier to form stronger bonds with one child than the other. As a result, it is important for the key person to form bonds with each child under their care.

respectful care and meaningful learning



Meaningful experiences for the child starts with the relationship with the child and caregiver or practitioner. A meaningful interaction with the infant should be attentive, warm, nurturing, responsive and respectful (childcareta). Making use of the connection that the child and caregiver or child and practitioner has with the child can stretch their knowledge, skills, understanding and language (Dombro,A 2011) Dombro, A 2011 also stated that having a good bond/ relationship with the child help the parent or practitioner able to make sensitive and responsive decisions about the next step in the childs learning.

There are many experiences that can be a meaningful learning experience for the child. One experience is nappy changes, nappy changes are a one on one time between child and caregiver, these are special significant time to communicate in a meaningful way with the infant. Talking to the child, speaking clearly and using correct language and vocabulary while changing the baby allows the child to pick up on these thing allowing the babies language to develop or improve.
(rainabownursery)

Baby led weaning is another, giving the child the independence to be able to feed themselves instead of the caregiver feeding the baby or practitioner, allowing the infant to feed themselves improved their hand-eye coordination (parents.com) respectful care come into this, while giving babies independence to feed themselves by staying present and observing the baby ensure that they do not put themselves at any risks during this new experience. It also allows the babies to remain calm and safe as it is a new experience for them, reassuring the baby that it is okay for them do it by themselves will provide them with the confidence to improve.

international approaches



Forest school

Although there is no precise definition, the foundation of forest schools is the idea of developing child-centered, nature-based Community Learning Environments. Practitioners in these settings strive to nurture learners through exploration and discovery, nurturing meaningful experiences for positive, lifelong impacts that have a demonstrated benefit for the preservation of the environment. (twinkle.co.uk)

Places where children can explore and play while getting the holistic care they need to grow. It is a more fundamental approach to learning and development in all domains, with the goal of lowering learners' stress levels through improving the learning environment. A certified Forest School Leader must oversee an approved forest school. (introduction to forest school)

Difference between a forest school and traditional schools

Anyone who hasn't seen or heard of this type of play-based learning experience for young children will immediately recognise the setting of a forest school as the most significant distinction. The environment directly affects the nature of learning and the protection of the young learners, and the forest serves as the classroom.

For instance, in one school outside the UK, students are required to wear wellies because of the local animals, such as snakes, but at another nearby school, this is not a problem.

The learning that is created or transferred to the young child in a forest school is typically a more all-encompassing experience. Learning is an experience that reflects the natural world around it.

Children are urged to learn via play and the practical application of new skills. They learn to take risks, collaborate more with their peers and other kids, and work on challenging tasks.

Cons and benefits

The benefits of forest schools include:

Children who are independent – Many forest school practises foster curiosity and the ability to formulate your own inquiries. This results in robust, independent learners.

Enhancing concentration - Because their entire environment is the classroom, it is fantastic for younger children who find it difficult to concentrate in a traditional classroom setting. This allows for a much more active learning environment. Numerous anecdotal reports indicate that behavioural problems become better or perhaps go away.

The negatives include:

Children spend every day outside, rain or shine, so it may be difficult and difficult on brutally cold days. (Some of our excellent Forest School leaders did tell us that when the weather is extremely awful, they also go to museums.) Additionally, if you have the proper wellies and waterproofs for forest school, this is less of an issue?

It is not appropriate for all children – It does not suit all children. As with any parent selecting a school, be sure to check out your local forest school and decide whether you believe your child will be a good fit.

How are children in forest schools cared for

Child safety in a real-world environment classroom is a top priority for practitioners and parents of the children in attendance. The main concern for all is safety, which must be proven and maintained in order for the Forest School to be approved by the local authority or governing body.

When it comes to being outside, the weather, especially in the UK, is a major concern. The use of shelters or protected areas, as well as managing experience-based learning in accordance with weather conditions, are all part of the ongoing risk assessment.

The lesson plan includes the use of outdoor protective clothing, life vests, and products such as sunscreen, antiseptic wipes, and washes.

The teacher-to-student ratio is very high in comparison to other schools, and all teachers are extensively trained in first aid and other life-saving skills.

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