

What does exceptional care look like in the First 1000 days



(Sources: Baby Mozart 2018).

What is the First 1000 days?



(Sources: Jantzen no date)

Further explanation on the first 1000 days: [The first 1000 days of life | Sergio Pecorelli | TEDxHECParis \(youtube.com\)](#)

Bust and Pedro (2022), states that community Health workers believe that the first 1000 days is fundamental for a child's development, this period starts from 0-2 years of age. One of the most important considerations of this study is that the bond between the mother/caregiver plays a key part in the child's first 1000 days (Save the children 2016). Following this statement, Save the children (2016) imply that a child brain starts to develop skills, such as explore the world around them by observing others, building an emotional attachment and communication skills. According to neuroscience these first 1000 days show us how important these factors are and how this will reflect on the child's brain development later in a child's life (Save the Children 2016).

It is a well-known that during a child first 1000 days, intervention plays a key role in the child overall outcomes, and this allows us to observe the child during this fundamental period. Another fact is that mother/caregiver overall health plays a key factor in the child first 1000 days, and this could affect the child health and well-being. These outcomes are greater in low-income communities and children in poverty (Crystal et al 2018). Guardian news (2019), states that this is known as stunting, and this will affect the child later in life and can affect their education and their holistic development. To analyse this, children will be more likely become ill if they do not have the correct nutrition's during their time in the womb and when they are born. Children need clean water, good nutrition's, and access to health care to be able to fully develop in their first thousand days. For instance, good nutrition is important as children need vegetables and fruits for their body and brain to work and develop (Guardian news 2019).

Why is the first 1000 days important?

TED (2018) tell us how the first 1000 days of a child life is important, and this is an expeditious period. Secondly, when looking at a child's first 1000 days we need to look at the child development from a holistic approach and to look at the child overall development. According to TED talks (2018) a child having a strong start to life is the key to success, as this enables the child to grow and to develop. Following this if a child does not have a strong start to life the 1,000 of new connection that happen every second in a child's first 1000 days means that the child will lack in opportunities that are fundamental for a child holistic development (Ted 2018). For instance, singing, playing, talking, and reading to the child helps forms a positive relationship between the child and mother/caregiver and this is what exceptional care looks (Ted 2018).



(Sources: GOV. UK 2016)



According to BASW (2019), parental substance can have an impact on a child's first 1000 days, for example this can have an impact on their holistic development, safety, and an emotional attachment to the mother/caregiver (BASW 2019). These are some factors that can affect a child when the mother/caregiver is pre-natal is:

- Smoking
- Poor nutrition
- Mental health
- Domestic abuse
- Poverty

Additionally, if a mother/caregiver has been affected by these factors this gives a considerable risk of the child's brain to not growing and develop to its full potential (BASW 2019). While the child brain is developing one factor that can affect the child first 1000 days is poor nutrition. According to the 1000 day (N.D), poor nutrition can affect the child to do well in school and have a successful life in the future. It is often said that it will be difficult for the child and family to rise out of poverty as they have no access to health care and will find it challenging to afford good nutritious food for the child to develop.

What is exceptional care?

In the first 1000 days of a child's life is known as an opportunity for children to build a form of attachment and how it a critical period in a child's life (American Academy of paediatrics No date). Another factor is Bowlby emphasises that attachment is one of the most important factors of survival, and how every child needs that form of attachment with their mother/caregiver and when they start education to for fill their individual needs (Cherry 2023).



(Sources: Cherry, K. 2022)

Maslow theory believe in the hierarchy of needs, and he believed for the child to have the best outcome in life these needs were important. According to Maslow, to prevent a child from neglect the hierarchy of needs play a key role in this (Cherry 2022). The hierarchy of needs should allow the child to grow as a person. It is a well-known fact food and water is vital for a child to be able to survive as this is a basic need. When it comes to first 1000 days attachment is important but also a child feeling a sense of security and belonging, this is what exceptional care looks like in the first 1000 days. To expand of this, a sense of security and belonging will allow children to protected from neglect and abuse and having a strong sense of security in the first 1000 days will allow children to for fill Maslow hierarchy of needs (Cherry 2022). To says these children will be able to develop into the person they want to become and to for fill their needs (Patrick et al 2023). Following this, without the sense of belonging and that form of security Maslow believed children will not have the basic needs met and this can affect their development in the first 1000 days (Patrick et al 2023).

Why is it important?

Pikler considered the first 1000 days as the most critical period of a child's life and development (Asim Ari 2022). The first aspect to note is that Pikler believed that when a child is in education, care should also be seen as important, and practitioners should promote exceptional care. During Pikler approach she analysed the well-being of children and what factors would affect the child well-being. Pikler approach was creating a form of reality with humans and material to support their basic needs. Asim Ari (2022) states that it is important to remember to allow the child to be free and imaginative during free play and in their first 1000 days, as this will result children to be more independent. A Primary caregiver should promote attachment and ensure that every child as an opportunity to experiences this (Asim Ari 2022).

[Little Climber Pikler Triangle \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

The Pikler association states that the Pikler approach is when a child and adult have a secure form of attachment and respect. Pikler believed that these 8 principles were important.

- Motor development
- Free movement
- Uninterrupted play
- Caring moment with the child and build trust.
- Slow down
- Undivided attention
- Respect
- With and not to

This means when a baby is being changed you should make that a learning experiences for the child and to engage with the child while talking and interacting with what the child is doing.

Pikler also believed that every child should have the freedom to move freely, as Pikler stated that children are more capable that what we think (Sagastui 2020). This is where Pikler invented the Pikler triangle.

Why is it important?

Pikler triangle is a way for children to start developing at their own pace, explore their own body and learn about boundaries. As a result of this Pikler triangle helps children gross motor skills and their physical development. During the first 1000 days children will experience free play, Pikler triangle allows children to use free movement and to slow down when they have learnt boundaries (The modern mindful mom 2023). Pikler's triangle can be introduced from the age of 6 months old during this period a child will be able to use the triangle to pull themselves up and down. Then from the age of one to two a child will be able to climb the triangle and can walk back down. For a child younger than 6 months a mother/caregiver could use the triangle for sensory developments, this could be like putting toys on top of the triangle for the child to reach (The modern mindful mom 2023). This can be used for the first 1000 days in many ways to help the child development.

What's a
Pikler Triangle?



(Sources: The Modern Mindful Mom 2023)

Professional partnership

According to Gov. Wales website (2023) there are 3 different types of key principles, enabling adults, engaging experiences and effective environment. These Key Principles are to support teacher and practitioners about the new curriculum in Wales and how they can support children learning (Gov. Wales website 2023). The New Curriculum in Wales according to the Welsh Government (2023) is not only about learning but why children learn and how. Following this the New Curriculum is built for all children and is based on that individual child. The New curriculum have four purposes these are:

- To be ambitious learners
- Creativity
- Learn about Wales and the world around them.
- To be confident and healthy children

For children to grow into healthy adults this curriculum support children from the age of 3-16. Welsh Government (2023) states that as practitioners we need to ensure the children have these experiences. This must be considered as practitioners when working in a setting. These factors are all child-centred and every child should be seen as equal.

- Belonging
- Communication
- Exploration
- Physical development
- Well-being



(Sources:
Good Net
2014)

Professional partnership

Enabling adult is a secure base and a person that create a safe environment for all children. Also, the environment should allow children to express themselves which allows their behaviour to be positive. Another factor is an enabling adult should support the child during transition in the setting and outside the setting (Gov. Wales website 2023). It also important that we observe the child when in the setting.

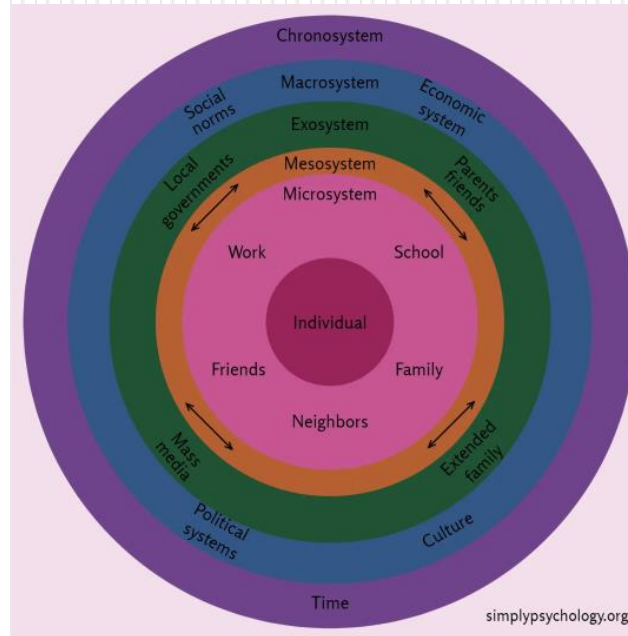
Engaging experience is promoting independence as practitioner for children when they are learning, this means providing opportunities active learning and real-life situations, this allows children to solve problems and develop the awareness around them. Real-life situation could be gardening and teaching all children where our food comes from and how it grows. Secondly for children in their first thousand day they could have opportunities to make their own food for snack time. This allows children to develop these skills. Engaging experiences should make the child feel respected and valued as an individual. For instance, celebrating the Welsh language and other cultures around them (Government Wales website 2023).

According to Government Wales website (2023) enabling environment should allow children to experience in the outdoor and indoor play, as this allows children to explore and learn about the world around them. This means children will feel a sense of belonging which is important for a childcare. When ensure a child as an enabling environment this means we can observe what the child is interested in and how we can ensure our learning is linked to the child interest (Government Wales website 2023).

Professional partnership

Bronfenbrenner's theory is important when it comes to looking at exceptional care; he believed that the environmental factor and family structures and how they influence on a child's development. According to Olivia (2023), Bronfenbrenner had 5 different levels of environmental factors that can influence a child. These are, microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Following this, these factors affect the child development as Bronfenbrenner looks at this as a complex system. Bronfenbrenner states that the microsystem as the most important influences in the child development as this looks at the child's, family, and school.

An example of the microsystem is supporting the child and parent while doing educational activities at home such as reading. This could be supporting the family in the best way to ensure the child has the best possible outcome (Olivia 2023). This system could be used in the first 1000 days during a transition period; a child could find it hard to come into a Flying start centre. As practitioners we should collaborate with the parents to see if they know the best way to support the child and how this could be easier for a child. According to healthy children (2021), having a security object such as a blanket could be an emotional support for the child during transition.



(Sources: Evans, G.O. 2023)

When collaborating with parents/carers communication is important, this is called mesosystem where parents/carers and teacher communicate between each other about the child. Therefore, it is important that parents/carers, teacher, and children build that form of trust when working as partnership (Olivia 2023).

An example of this is, if the parents is using drugs or struggling to give the best possible care for the child, teacher can ensure they find the best possible way to support the family. Substance misuse can affect the development of a baby and could lead to the child later in life to develop these substance misuse.

[Ecological systems theory \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Professional partnership

Professional love is important when it comes to working in an early years setting. The meaning of professional love according to practitioners is being caring, giving attention to the child, being kind and most importantly being available for the child so that the child feels valued. These meanings of professional love shows that this is what expectational care looks like (University of Sheffield 2015). Also, many believe that attachment was also another definition of professional love. If practitioners care for the child that this is the best way to form an attachment with that individual child. According to University of Sheffield 2015, having that strong form of relationship between the practitioners and parent/carer and working together to understand what is best for the child and what the parents expect from that setting when the child is in their care. Professional love is also important to ensure every child individual needs are met. When working in an early year setting having that form of attachment can ensure that the child is comfortable in the setting and the setting can support parents on how they can build that form of attachment, so that the child feels care and valued (Page 2014).



Challenges

There are many challenges that have affected children for the first 1000 days. Research shows that Covid had a significant impact on children social and emotional development especially children with Additional learning needs (Welsh Government 2021). Following, this children with additional learning needs may have a delay in their speech and language but experts say that children from, low-income family, family in poverty and children from single parent household also have been seen to have a delay in speech and language. According to Welsh Government (2021), because of the lack of support services for children during Covid this has a significant impact on children's development. On the other hand, some children could build that form of attachment with their caregiver during the pandemic. For children with key workers in their family, children from the age of 0-2 could not build that form of attachment (Welsh Government 2021).

According to BBC news (2021), the first 1000 days of a child's life is critical for their development because of this the pandemic will have a lifelong effect on children later in life. Health visitors state that the pandemic had a huge impact on them. This is because Health visitors were not able to see any children and see how the child was developing (BBC news 2021).

The outside world has a significant impact on children with additional learning needs, but the pandemic has made an even greater challenges. First, children could not have the support they needed from health visitors and different agencies because of lockdown which effected their outcome after the pandemic which mean they will be delayed (BBC news 2021).

In approaching the pandemic 4 years later, as practitioners we need to enable face-to-face with health visitors to ensure the child is getting the support they need and to work with families to be able to support them through these times (Government UK 2022).



Challenges

Another Challenge for providing high quality care is the cost-of-living crisis. According to action for children (2023), the pandemic was also a massive financial struggle for families as they could not afford heating which meant they will live in poverty because of this. Many families could not afford to buy food as the prices have doubled (Action for children 2023). This meant children could not receive the food that they needed to develop which could affect their holistic approach.



The way of tackling this challenge is the Government need to provide more public services for families in need and to ensure every child has a secure base to live in and ensure every child have the facilities for health care to ensure every child in the first 1000 days are healthy (Action for children 2023).

Another challenge that we face with providing high quality care is children with additional learning needs. The Equality act 2010 every child with additional learning needs should be in an environment with inclusive practice and adjustment should be made for that individual child's needs from the first 1000 days of a child's life. This is important to prevent the child having additional needs with no support from early age (Government.UK No date).



Activities

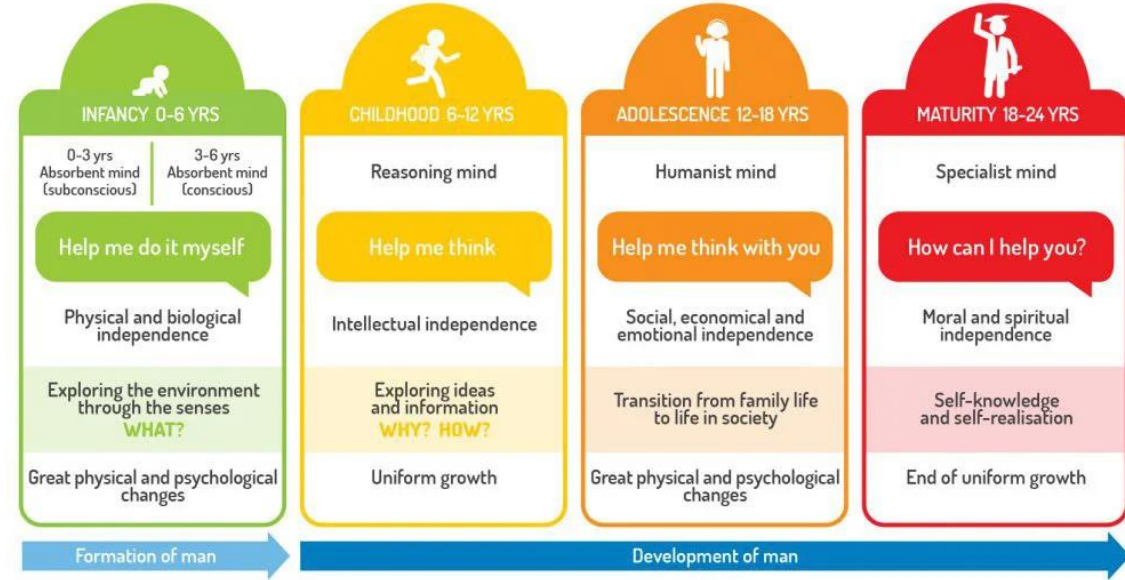
Maria Montessori approach was a non-traditional approach to children learning, Montessori believed that children should learn independently based on their own development (Ruhi 2023). One of the most important considerations of this study is the Montessori believed that every child in early years education should have 3 hours of free play, children should have the opportunity to be mixed with different age groups and have specific learning materials (Ruhi 2023). Montessori setting is looks at a child overall holistic development. Another study of Montessori approach is that that learning should be child-centred as this allows practitioners to observe children (Ruhi 2023).



(Sources: Hub
Pages 2015)

An example of Montessori classroom that will support children in their first 1000 days, will be in an environment where they will be using real life skills, these could be teaching a child to use scissors, washing dishes. Ruhi (2023) states that this will allow children to develop fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. This will allow children to develop on their own independent while using real life skills (Ruhi 2023).

FOUR PLANES OF DEVELOPMENT



(Sources:
Ruhi, Ch.
2023)

[Montessori School
Education \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Activities

Messy play is important for first 100 days it allows children to develop a sense of curious while learning from play. Messy play can be used as a way of calming and sensory for some children with additional learning needs. In other words, it may allow children to express themselves through play. Not only is messy play a way for children to express themselves it can also be used to teach curriculum learning, deliver opportunities and their first 1000 days as it allows them to learn from the world around them (Gascoyne 2018).



(Sources: Norden Farm no date)



[The Ultimate Sensory Play Activity for Babies - Basket of Treasures \(babymozart.org\)](http://babymozart.org)

(Sources: The Kavanaugh report 2020)



The meaning of loose part is materials that can be moved and stacked, this allows children to be creative while playing. Messy play should be provided outdoors and indoors as this allows children to learn through play and curiosity (Early Year Resources 2020).

International approaches

The Reggio Emilia approach started in Italy by a person called Loris Malaguzzi. According to Berg (2024) he states that the Reggio Emilia approach is that the child learns from their own environment, this comes from children being curious and the bond they build with people around them. Learning should be driven by children, this is known as the third teacher, this allows children from an early stage in their life to problem solve, teamwork and communication skills. Berg (2024). To allow children to have these opportunity's we need to provided recourses for the child to be imaginative.

[Reggio Emilia Education \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd8j8j8j8j8)

[Preschool Classroom Reggio | Preschool Classroom IDEA](#)



(Sources: Blog spot no date)

Reggio Emilia approach is like our approach in Wales for the non-curriculum setting. It similar in many way because both approach looks at the children as a unique individual and how important play is for the child's development.

[A curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

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