

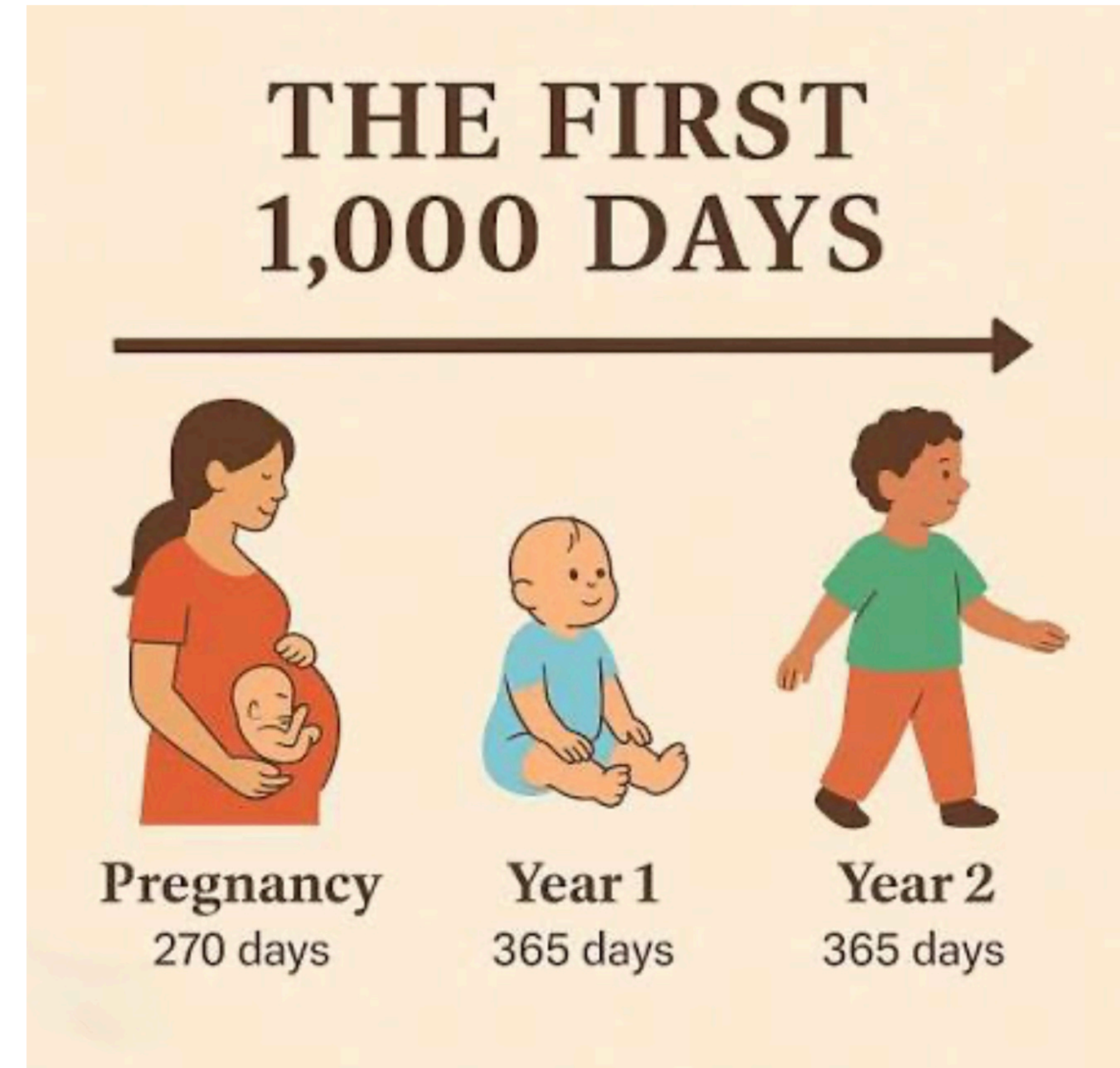
First 1000 Days



The first 1000 days

What Are the First 1000 Days?

- The period from conception to a child's second birthday.
- The most rapid stage of human growth and development.
- Foundations for health, learning, and wellbeing are formed.
- Why Are They Important?
- Rapid brain development—80% of adult brain size by age 2.
- Neural connections shaped by nurturing and interaction.
- Early experiences influence long term health and learning.
- Nutrition before and after birth.
- Responsive caregiving and secure relationships.
- Safe, stable, and engaging environments.
- Long Term Impact
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Care giving :

Exceptional Care
Enabling Environments •
Inclusive Practice • Key
Theorists



What Is Exceptional Care?

- Child centred caregiving that meets emotional, physical, and developmental needs.
- Goes beyond basic care to build warm, responsive relationships.
- Supports independence, confidence, and secure attachment.
- Enabling Environments
- Safe, predictable, and stimulating spaces.
- Encourage exploration and child led learning.
- Foster confidence, security, and curiosity.
- Adults support learning through observation and gentle guidance.
- Inclusive Practice
- Ensures every child feels valued and included.
- Meets diverse needs through adaptations and flexible approaches.
- Respects culture, identity, and family background.
- Promotes belonging, self esteem, and equal access to learning.
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Factor	Influence
Funding	Limited resources, fewer staff, reduced training opportunities.
Staffing & Workforce Shortages	High turnover affects attachments; understaffing leads to stress.
Training & Professional Development	Lack of training reduces support for diverse needs.
Inclusive Practice & Meeting Diverse Needs	Insufficient adaptations affect equity and accessibility.
Environment & Space	Poor space design limits exploration and safety.
Partnerships with Parents	Weak communication reduces consistency and progress.

Professional partnerships



Why the First 1000 Days Matter

- Covers conception to age 2 — the most rapid stage of development
- Brain forms billions of neural connections
- Foundations for emotional wellbeing, physical health, and learning
- Early experiences shape long-term outcomes
- Provide warm, responsive, and consistent caregiving
- Support secure attachments through key person relationships
- Encourage early communication, language, and sensory exploration
- Offer rich, enabling environments for play and discovery
- Encourage healthy habits in feeding, hygiene, and sleep
- Work closely with health visitors and other professionals

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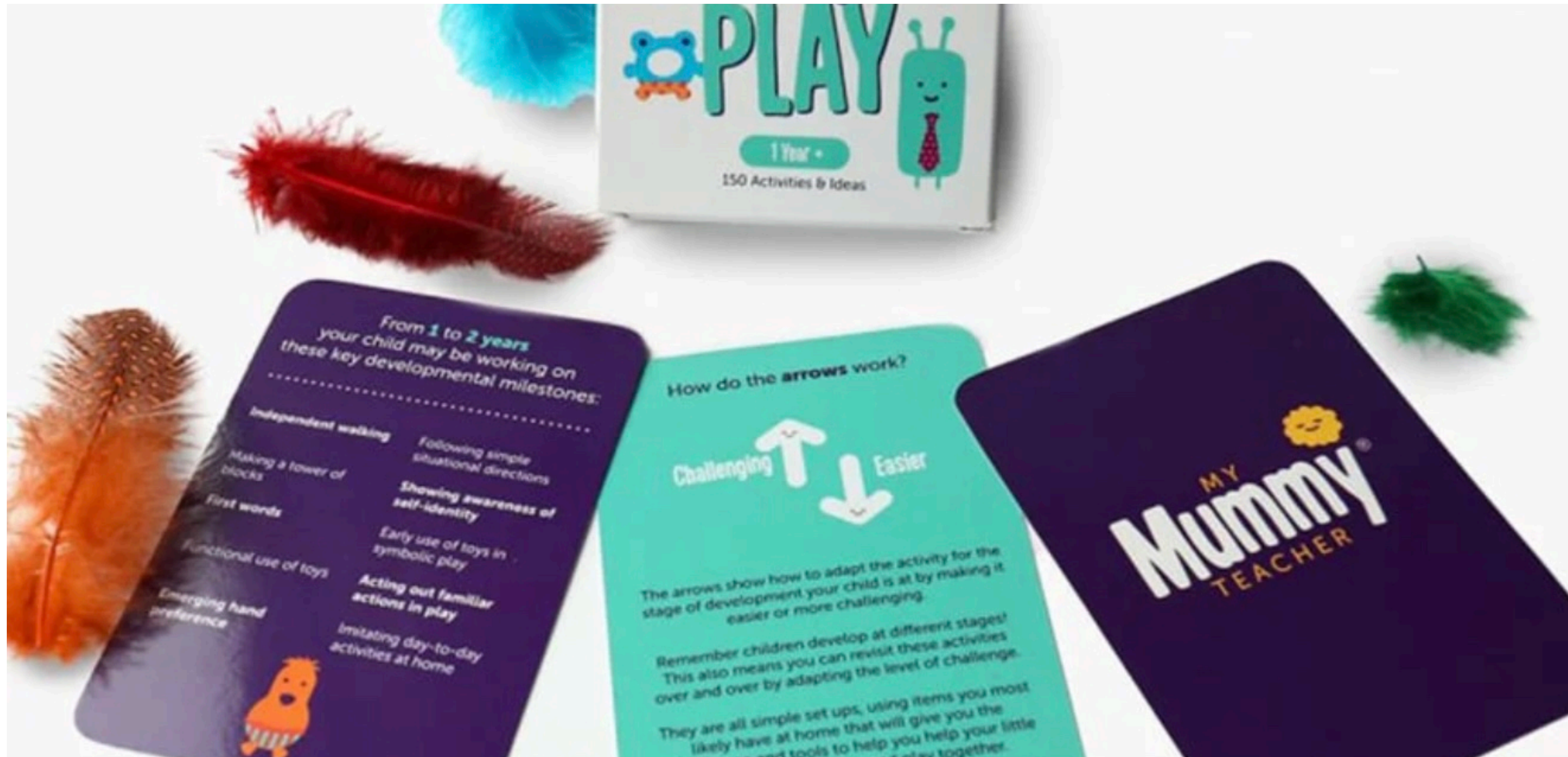
Why is it important to work in partnership during this period?

- Build trusting, respectful, and non judgemental relationships
- Communicate regularly about the child's progress and needs
- Offer guidance on milestones, routines, and early development
- Listen to parental concerns and provide reassurance
- Support families through transitions or challenges
- Signpost to services such as SEND support, health services, or community resources
- Early Identification and Intervention
- Observe children closely for signs of delay or additional needs
- Record and share concerns following safeguarding and SEND procedures
- Collaborate with external professionals (speech and language, health visitors, SENCOs)
- Provide tailored support strategies within the setting
- Advocate for the child and family if further support is needed
- Recognise that parental mental health affects child development
- Offer emotional support and a listening ear
- Encourage positive parent child interactions
- Provide information about local support networks or services
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Maternal Factors and Support Strategies

- Postnatal depression or anxiety – Support through mental health services, counselling, and peer support groups.
- Poor maternal nutrition – Guidance on healthy eating, vitamin supplementation, and referral to dietitians.
- Substance use (alcohol, tobacco, drugs) – Access to addiction support programs and prenatal care monitoring.
- Chronic health conditions – Coordinated care with healthcare providers and regular check ups.
- Stress from socioeconomic factors – Connect families to financial advice, housing support, and community resources.
- Limited parenting knowledge – Parenting classes, workshops, and educational resources.
- Social isolation – Encourage engagement with parent groups and community networks.
- Physical recovery post birth – Support with postnatal care, physiotherapy, and healthcare follow-ups.
- Unplanned pregnancy or lack of family support – Offer counselling, social work support, and family planning advice.
- Maternal mental stimulation and bonding – Guidance on responsive caregiving, play, and early attachment activities.
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Activities that my mummy beacher provide meaningful learning

Activities to support a child in the first 1000 days

- Tummy time / supervised floor play — Lay baby on their tummy when awake (with supervision) to strengthen neck, shoulder and core muscles and support motor development and later movement skills.
- Sensory play with safe household objects or natural materials — Offer soft fabrics, clean containers, textured items, safe household objects (e.g. wooden spoons, empty boxes), and let baby touch, grasp and explore different textures, shapes and sounds.
- Reading, singing or talking regularly — Share picture books, nursery rhymes or simple songs to support language development, early communication skills, bonding, and listening to sounds and rhythm.
- Interactive playtime led by child (serve and return) — Let the child lead play sometimes; respond to their cues, mimic them, describe what they do and actively engage — this promotes emotional bonding, communication, and responsive caregiving.
- Safe exploratory movement as soon as possible — When baby begins to roll, crawl or pull to stand, encourage free movement, crawling, exploring safe spaces — this helps build gross motor skills, balance and spatial awareness.
- Sensory rich messy or water play (when age appropriate) — For toddlers, simple water play or sensory bins, messy play with safe materials, open-ended manipulation — promotes exploration, sensory development, creativity and fine motor skills.
- Music, movement, dancing and rhythm games — Simple songs, clapping, bouncing, dancing help babies and toddlers with physical coordination, rhythm, body awareness and social/emotional bonding.
- “Treasure basket” / heuristic play baskets — Fill a basket with everyday safe objects of different textures, materials, shapes (e.g. wooden spoon, fabric scrap, soft toy) so babies can explore, feel and experiment — fostering curiosity, sensory and cognitive exploration.
- Everyday routines as learning opportunities (bathing, feeding, cuddling) — Use daily routines (bath time, feeding, cuddling) as times for interaction, talking, touch, singing or storytelling — great for bonding, emotional security, language exposure and sensory experience.
- Allow time for independent or self-directed play (safe & supervised) — Give toddlers some safe, free space and time to explore on their own or with minimal adult direction — helps build autonomy, self confidence, problem solving and creativity.

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Reggio Emilia Approach – What is it?

- Reggio Emilia Approach – What is it?
- Child centred approach from Italy emphasising children as capable, competent learners.
- Focuses on exploration, creativity, and “the hundred languages of children” (different ways children express themselves).
- Educators act as co learners and observers, documenting children’s progress.
- Learning is project based, emergent, and driven by children’s interests.
 - Supporting Child Development in the First 1000 Days
- Encourages early communication and language through responsive interaction and storytelling.
- Supports cognitive development via sensory exploration and problem-solving activities.
- Fosters emotional development by valuing children’s ideas, promoting confidence, and secure attachments.
- Stimulates curiosity and creativity through open ended materials, such as loose parts, natural objects, and art.
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