



The First One Thousand Days

The first 1000 days of a baby's life is so important due to so many factors. For example, a baby's experiences throughout the first 1000 days of life can affect their health and wellbeing for the rest of their lives. The first 1000 days applies to a baby's life from the moment they are conceived until they reach 2 years of ages meaning 24 months. The baby's brain, body, and immune systems expand and develop dramatically throughout this period. A baby's brain adapts to its environment and portrays the type of person they will slowly grow into. Jean- Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) links within this statement as she explains how learning is developmental with children passing through stages, as well as this, child development is highly influenced by the society into which they are born.



1 - Baby's need healthy food, the perfect diet during pregnancy and in early infancy will assist in your baby's optimal learning, physical development, and emotional growth. As well as this, time to explore and play, loving and strong relationships and bonds with not only their families but practitioners, children in their setting and so on. As The NHS UK (2022) states that when babies are around 6 months old, mothers should begin weaning, also known as complementary feeding or introducing solid foods to your infant. The amount of food babies consumes at first is less crucial than getting them accustomed to eating. The majority of their nourishment, nutrients and energy will still come from breast milk or their bottles of new-born baby formula. A baby is ready for their first solid foods combined with breast milk or first infant formula when three distinct signals start to occur together around the age of 6 months. They will be able to maintain their posture while sitting, maintain head stability, and coordinate their eyes, hands, and mouth so they can look at the food, pick it up, put it in their mouth on their own, and swallow it, rather than spitting it back out. Once children can eat solid food, they will learn to eat from their hands and cutlery with support. It is vital that hygiene for either the parent or practitioner is up to high standards as well as the baby's food. Relationships that are secure and loving are essential for your child's growth. Babies learn to think, interpret, communicate, express emotions, and learn how to behave through their relationships. Baby's also need safety and security and a healthy environment to develop in (as well as being in the womb).



2 - In an early childcare setting, it is vital for practitioners to manage responsibility, the policies, and practice and supporting the environment. As Jane Johnston (2009), portrays that the management must establish the right conditions so that everyone can cooperate to complete tasks in order to guarantee that all the practitioners in the setting are working consistently, effectively, and with the right knowledge. The manager should use a management style that empowers and delegate the responsibilities to staff with experience and qualifications to guarantee that practitioners are motivated and supportive of the routines and every child.



3 - Professional relationships are especially important throughout every childcare setting. Professional relationships and connections in the childcare industry include improving outcomes for children and their families. This depends on building and sustaining healthy relationships. A Key thinker that agrees with this statement is Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925) as he portrays that relationships between children and practitioners are particularly important for learning. It is the responsibility of the practitioners to create an environment where the families and children feel that their needs are being acknowledged and understood thoroughly. There are numerous practitioners working with children and their families in every early year's environment. As Jane Johnston (2009), expresses that the parents and children within childcare settings can be unaware of the differences in their respective roles and duties. They might not know the distinctions between a speech therapist, a physiotherapist, a manager, a student, a teacher, or a teaching assistant. Together, the professionals and practitioners will play to their own areas of strength and expertise. They can provide high-quality and efficient assistance for children's educational, social, emotional, and physical development when the practitioners collaborate with amazing understanding, trust, and efficient communication skills. Children want to feel comfortable, happy, healthy, and safe within their childcare environment. Te Whariki (1996- onwards) explains the importance of children having an intense sense of belonging within their families and communities plus happiness and wellbeing.



4 - Sensory activities are vital for young children. Children utilise their senses to explore and attempt to make sense of the world around them from birth throughout early childhood. Activities that engage more than one sense, such as listening to a story, are considerably more engrossing for young children. Regular sensory play helps children develop their cognitive skills and refine their sensory perception, as their developing brains learn how to interpret and react to various stimuli, it assists in helping those connections become stronger. Sensory activities include balancing on a beam, playing in a sandbox, on the swings, playing with instruments, getting read a story, jumping, painting, water play and so on. As Julia Pelly (2020), describes that when young infants are interacting and engaging with the world, the activities through sensory play stimulate their five senses which is taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing. It is vital for each childcare setting to not only include sensory activities inside the setting, but outside and in various places of environment. Being outside benefits children's overall development, including their social, emotional, physical, cognitive, cultural, and personal growth. When we encounter the outdoors, we employ all our senses, which enhances the memory of the event which is crucial for a young child's growth. Learning about the outdoors helps us understand the four goals of the Curriculum for Wales and develop a feeling of Cynefin.

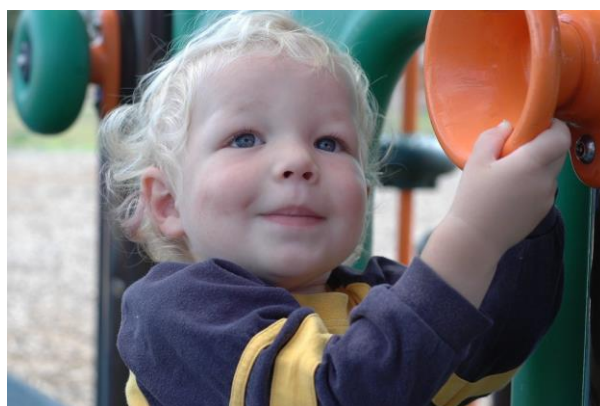


5 - As young children take part in meaningful learning opportunities, they learn many new skills including physical, mental, language, communication and numeracy skills. For example, children learn well by actively engaging with their environment. As Raising Children (2023) suggests that this could include observing different things, responding to practitioners speaking to them, watching children and practitioners faces and their expressions, exploring (for example

shaking an object), experimenting with different textures such as sand, clay, water and so on. Children should be fully involved within learning, this could include choosing a book they want to read, choosing what activity they would like to complete, choosing and pointing at which rhyme or song they want to listen too, pointing at pictures or drawings and so on. As John Dewey (1859-1952) links with this due to him explaining how experiences central to learning- it is what children take from experiences that is important as children will learn/not learn in different ways.



6 - Veronica McCarthy (2017) portrays that activities that utilise more than one sensory pathway to the brain are referred to as Multi-Sensory Activities. The information is easier to recall later if there are multiple pathways into the brain (remembering). Multisensory learning techniques are beneficial for learning and recalling vital information for anyone with a learning disability which is extremely useful within childcare settings. Multi-sensory activities should provide opportunities for every child in a childcare setting to make and choose from a variety of materials with unique properties. Practitioners should encourage children to develop their creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and imagination skills. Practitioners should always support children to communicate with one another and help each other as they develop new skills. Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994) agrees with this statement as he describes the flexible approach with focus on environment, problem solving, creative thinking and exploration. Activities such as reading stories, listening to music, and singing songs and rhymes are very vital activities for babies as they expand children's vocabulary as well as children's ability to use language appropriately and correctly. The repetition in rhymes and songs helps children memorise words and phrases. Listening to music includes all areas of children's development skills including motor skills, intellectual skills, social and emotional skills, language skills and so on. In an educational setting, the outdoors is frequently linked to physical development. However, it is crucial to offer opportunities for the development of both fine and motor skills within of a controlled environment.



7 - As Jane Johnston explains that an indoor environment can accommodate gross motor development with proper planning and a lot of imagination. Greenland (2006) discusses the relevance of providing such space as this helps develop senses connected to movement. It is crucial that children can engage in quality outdoor play. Children need to be given the opportunity to learn how to manage different portions of their bodies, and this may be done by strategically planning the outdoor area with a safe and adventurous space to play. The benefits of a suitably, planned,

environment for the young children to play on, is that it is planned out to each child's needs. These including additional needs, learning needs, likes, dislikes and allergies. Piaget is the theorist who has been associated with play in a child's environment because he believed that play was crucial for the child's intellectual development and that their environment helps them to learn language, cognitive skills, and to become more aware of their surroundings. Outdoor areas with play equipment including swings, slides, climbing walls, and rope swings promote the use of the large muscles and gross motor abilities. The outdoor area to a nursery can be utilised to explore many parts of the curriculum, such as numeracy, language and art. Therefore, it is vital to remember that it should not just be used for physical activities. Physical skills are encouraged through activities primarily intended to support other curriculum topics.



8 - There are several challenges that practitioners can face within caring for an infant in a childcare setting. Children within childcare settings can experience challenging days. They could behave out in ways that can be difficult for practitioners, such as screaming, biting, throwing objects, and being emotional or poorly. Fortunately, there are numerous approaches to managing these behaviours. Although, some behaviours are not acceptable so children will be taught what is acceptable and what is not by having consequences and rewards such as a behaviour chart. Burrus Skinner (1904-1990) portrays that learning as an active process, learning occurs when behaviours are rewarded or when consequences are given, in which associations are formed from the different types of behaviours. For example, biting. Some ways on discouraging biting can be keeping the daily routine consistent, being patient with the child, providing remarkably close supervision- watching very carefully and being alerted to intervene. After that, children being angry and frustrated. As Haritha Karyampudi (2021) suggests how practitioners can act calm, take the child out the situation, try distracting the child from why they are angry and focus the child's attention on an original activity they may enjoy.

Aswell as this a child crying. Children cry when they are hungry, tired, frustrated, wanting attention, feeling unwell and many more reasons.



9 - There's not enough time ever being spent with each baby or child; this could cause distress for the child as they may feel as if they are not getting enough attention. Practitioners should respect the feelings of the child, provide plenty of time for the child to calm down and relax, understand why the child is upset, praise the child for their good efforts and try take their mind off the situation with a current activity. As Cristy James (2021) describes that good focus or interacting with babies in a way that conveys warmth and interest. As Cristy's research portrays that the use of positive attention when interacting with babies and young children reduces the frequency of negative behaviours. Positive attention can be shown to babies by soothing them when they cry, returning their smiles when they smile at them, observing their cues, and engaging them in conversation about their surroundings and their environment. As well as this, dealing with children who have a disability need more attention, for example (a one to one) and practitioners will have diverse ways on how to calm the children down depending on their disability and personality. For example, telling the child to take deep breaths, allow them to cuddle their favourite toy, to complete their favourite activity, try make them smile or laugh out of the situation they are in and so on. Babies become aware of behaviour and tend to copy adults, as Rudolph Steiner (1861-1925) portrays that children learn through imitation and adults model behaviour. This explain show adults need to show children the correct way to act and to be kind to everyone and have good manners. When working with such young children, practitioners need to be fully aware because of hazards (babies getting hurt).



10 - It is vital for practitioners to be inclusive throughout their environment, to all families and all children. To be inclusive means to accepted everyone, regardless of their physical or mental abilities and to make sure they are understood thoroughly. Early years settings are designed to offer a secure setting where parents, children, and practitioners can learn about one another's differences and similarities as well as develop empathy and gain knowledge for a sense of value for one another's unique needs. Inclusivity comprehends everyone is involvement and empowerment, everyone is recognised and respected well. Aswell as this, to be able to participate and contribute very meaningfully. As Nursery Resources (2019) portrays that young children are frequently welcoming of others despite aesthetic differences, so it is crucial to adapt this disposition and give your children access to different environments that teach them to be accepting of others' cultural and religious differences as well as any physical or mental differences. As Early Years Alliance (2019) suggests that a high-quality inclusive environment within childcare settings can support young children who are at risk of, or have already experienced, inequality and discrimination. During the formative and most important years of their learning and development, all children should have access to opportunities and assistance due to good inclusive practises. It also encourages and helps children gaining the self-assurance they need to pursue their future goals and happiness. Practitioners can help provide inclusivity in a childcare setting by being proactive at requiring and addressing all barriers which could include bullying, negativity, stereotyping and so on. Practitioners will make it bold and clear that this would not ever be acceptable.



11 - Childcare facilities must be assured of their capacity to be inclusive and equal and committed to doing exactly that. To foster collaborative ways, build good attitudes, and implement clear goals, a full group approach is necessary. This will necessitate that settings adapt a flexible strategy that goes beyond statutory policy and legal requirements to foster non-discriminatory attitudes and constructive behaviour. This is extremely important because each childcare setting needs to be equal, fair, joyful and positive for the children to be safe, parents need to feel that their child is happy and under good care and so on. As John Dewey (1859-1952) states that school should be an extension of home and community.



12 - The environment for a baby within childcare is vital for their growth. For example, a childcare setting should have several displays placed around the room. When parents first visit a setting, the first look of the room needs to grab their attention and be a positive first look. By prominently featuring children's artwork, projects they complete throughout their day, and other creations, displays promote attitudes of inclusivity. Photos of daily events and many different activities gives children a sense of involvement, it will encourage children to feel like they belong at the nursery and has a sense of calmness and security and will portray to the young children how important their participation is within the environment. Next including stimulating and joyful activities. As Danny White (2022) portrays, children who are in a stimulating setting are usually more present and have a bigger attention-span. All the unique colours, toys, and activities in a room or in an outside play are for the young children should be inviting and inspire a desire to participate. Activities that are challenging and appropriate for their level can rapidly capture children's attention although each child will be on different levels due to their needs and age, practitioners should make sure there are plenty of activities for all ages and abilities. Practitioners should have room for innovative and exciting play with activities such as puzzles, picture books, building blocks, jigsaws and so on.



13 - It is also very important there is a safe space where children can nap and relax, due to their age they can be tired so each setting should take this into account as all children need quiet time and need time to settle down as children can become emotional if they are exhausted. As well as this, children should be able to have a routine within their setting. If a child's surroundings are predictable, a young child will feel secure and in control. Childcare facilities typically follow a consistent schedule that the children get acclimated and used to. Routine changes must be clearly defined and explained to the children so they don't become anxious about the future as change to a very young child can become very overwhelming and a child can experience different emotions they are not used to. But one of the important and key themes of a positive and safe environment is for each unique child. Children can learn their likes and dislikes, can meet children their own age and build relationships with not only the children around them, but the practitioners too. Children can build their own character and personality and gain a sense of themselves and grow into a confident, happy child. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) writes a very similar understanding which is that childhood should be a time of happiness and the teacher is central to creating learning environments that lead to purposeful learning.



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