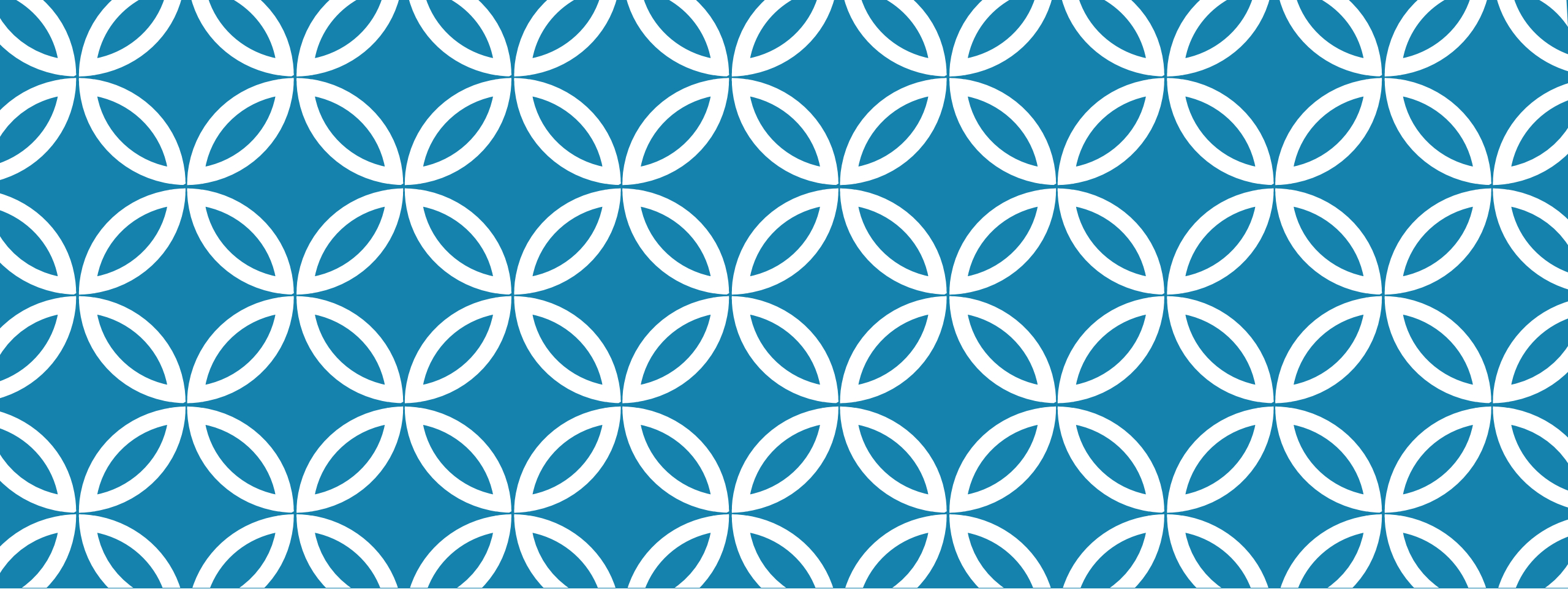




THE FIRST 1000 DAYS

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INTRODUCTION:

What is the first 1000 days?

According to Pregnancy birth and baby (2022) describes the life of a child from the time of creation till the child turns two years old (24 months). Their immune system, body and brain all undergo substantial growth and development during this time. Your health, diet and stress levels throughout pregnancy can impact the development of your unborn child. Your baby's health and wellness can be influenced for the rest of their life by their physical surroundings, diet, and social interactions after birth. As discussed by pregnancy birth and baby (2022) in the first 1000 days of a baby's life they will need: healthy food, loving relationships, safety and security, time to play and a healthy environment including the womb. UNICEF for every child (2017) claims that the period between a mother becoming pregnant and her child turning two is a special time when the groundworks is laid for long-term optimal health and development. In addition to determining a child's chance of survival, proper nutrition, and care throughout the first 1000 days of life affects the child's capacity to develop, learn and escape poverty. As a result, it promotes the long-term prosperity stability and health of society. The first 1000 days campaign is a major initiative of Cymru Well Wales, implementing the pledge to 'work together today to prevent the poor health tomorrow'. Haymer, L (2022) says that the early childhood interventions are used in the first 1000 days to support the overall health of the child and their families and careers. These measures commence well before pregnancy and continue during pregnancy and up until the child's second year of life.

Why is the first 1000 days of a baby's life important?

According to research, children who achieve a fundamental first 1000 days outcomes have a 20% higher adult income potential than their peers and are more likely to grow up in a stable family. Jenkin, L (2024) says that children who do not have a good start in life typically experience the consequences for the rest of their lives. According to National Institutes of health (2022) the first 1000 days of an individual's life, which spans from conception to age two are the most critical for the development of their body, brain, immune system and metabolism. There are several health issues linked to malnutrition including obesity and stunted growth. The National Institutes of health (2022) say that the first 1000 days of a child's existence are the most vulnerable and crucial since they set the stage for their growth and achievements. Dietary is a main source and supports during the first 1000 days of life is being used to show changes in the outcomes of birth and growth, in addition to infant and stunting. Mothers' malnutrition throughout conception, pregnancy and the postpartum period is associated with poor mother and child's health outcomes, especially poor birth outcomes.



(Source: Kendamil, no date)

CAREGIVING



(Source: kinder care, 2024)

What is exceptional care?

According to James, T (2018) exceptional care entails delivering care which is harm-free, reduces waste and redundancy, permits prompts access to necessary services, and adhere to best practice and takes patients' or children's choices and treatment colds into account. The best ways to support exceptional care are:

- Communication
- Accommodate
- Respect
- Engage

For a child to develop in the best ways possible these including:

- Responsive caregiving this means for the first three years of life, all infants and children should receive responsive car and parents and careers should be assisted in providing this care.
- Promoting early learning - the first three years of life, all infants and children should participate in early learning activities with their parents and other careers; parents and other careers should be encouraged to do the same.
- Integrate caregiving and nutrition interventions - Interventions for the optimum nutrition of newborns and early children should include support for responsive care and early learning (world health organization, no date)

During the child's development the child should access a range of different activities such as physical activities, creative activities and reading activities and many more. There are so many benefits for physical activities these being: developing the child's motor kills, improves cognitive development, contributes to a health weight, enhances bone and muscular development, and supports learning of social skills. According to Butcher, P (2016) from birth, physical exercise should be promoted especially through safe floor-based play and water-based activities.

Even when we want to children to develop in the best way possible the most important way is to always safeguard the children even when taking part in activities. According to NSPCCC (2024) safeguarding is everything that's been done to safeguard children from danger and to advance their welfare. To safeguard a child is to keep them safe from harm and abuse. shielding children's development and wellbeing from damage. ensuring that kids receive competent and safe care as they grow up.

PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

One of the most important aspects of supporting a child's growth in the first 1000 days is forming a good partnership. Cooperation in the child's best interest is crucial to ensuring that a clean plan is in place for their transition. Working with parents and variety of different agencies can enable effective interventions which enhances a child's transition. According to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, 'parents, families and practitioners working together to benefit children' is what is meant by a partnership. A partnership requires to be based on mutual trust, open communication, and accountability from all partners. Stars (2024) suggest these are the keyways for parents and practitioners can work together, these being:

- Supporting learning and development

- Sharing key information

- Contributing

- Being an advocate

The only way the partnership will work with both parties would be to have trust, involvement, shared expectation and keeping up to date with all the work. During work time with practitioners, practitioners could add a dairy and regular observations for the individual children, parents evening for practitioners and parents can come together to support the professional partnership.

Tovey (2020) addresses that Froebel's Principals, families, parents, and the community should be a big part in the child's connection to the growth during their time at nurseries, settings, or schools. According to the Welsh Government (2016) an atmosphere where parents and careers are fully involved in their child's education are encouraged to participate in it can be created via efficient communication.



(Source: Open.edu, 2023)

The initial picture above's emphasizes the significance it is to put the child at the heart of all conversations. Additionally, it shoes how important it is for the key person to coordinate and communicate with everyone involved in the child's care.

According to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, a child's development is seen as a complex system of relationships influenced by variety of environmental factors, extending from the immediate family and educational environment to wider social conventions, regulations, and values. The environment of an individual is separated into five systems by Bronfenbrenner, these being:

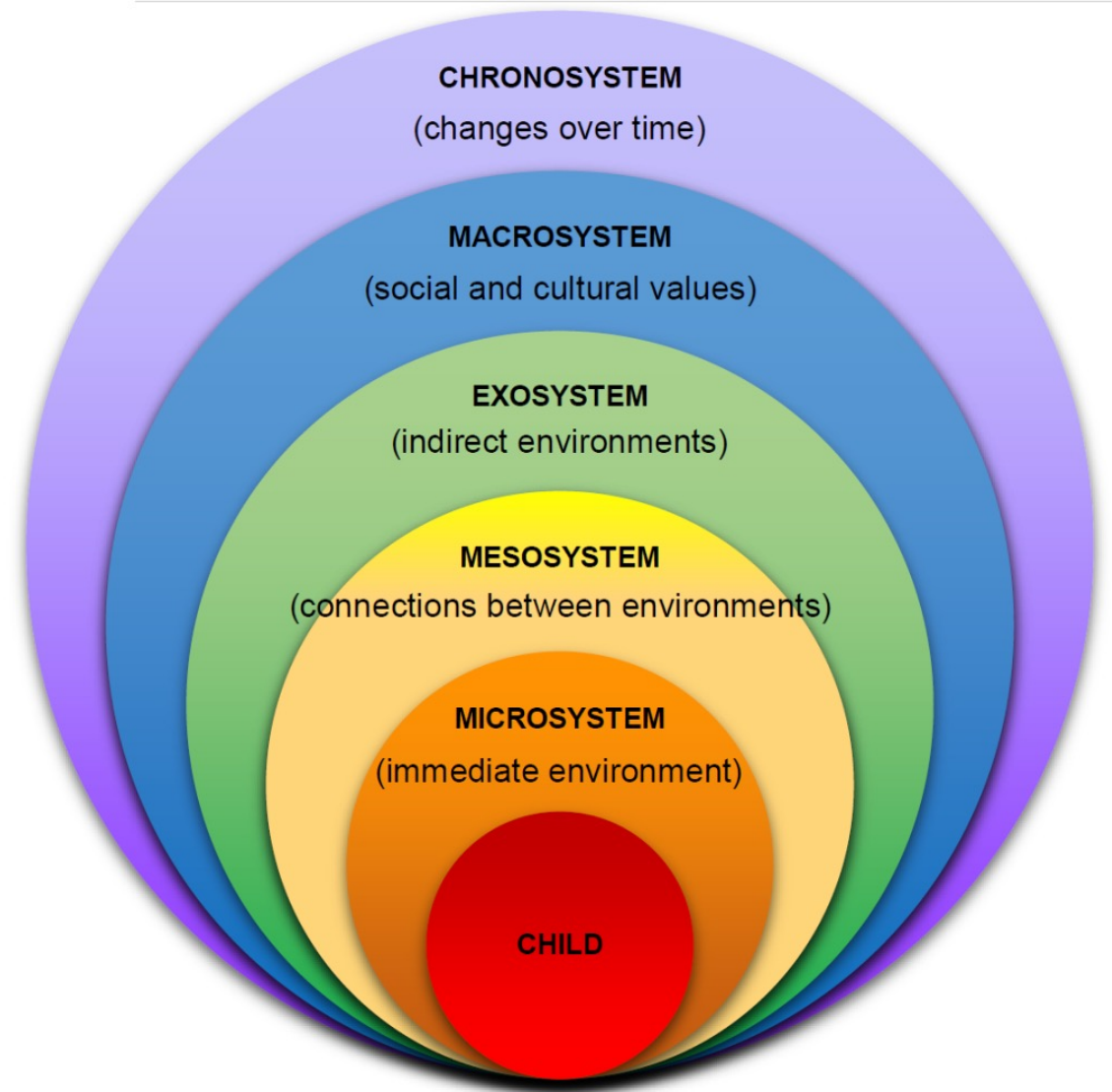
The microsystem is the initial level of Bronfenbrenner's theory and consists of the items in the child's immediate surrounding that come into direct contact with them.

The mesosystem is the state in which each person's separate microsystems interact with one another and have influence over one another rather than operating separately.

The ecosystem is a part of the ecological system theory which was created in the 1970's by Urie Bronfenbrenner.

The macrosystem focuses on the way which culture factors include the beliefs, behaviors, and social environments which children are exposed to and affects a child's development.

The chronosystem pertains to changes and transitions which occur throughout a child's life. Stress can come from these contextual shifts, which can be expected, like starting school or unexpected, such as parental divorce or moving schools when parents travel for a job.



(Source: Protel project, no date)

CHALLENGES

There are many challenges when a child develops in the first 1000 days these being:

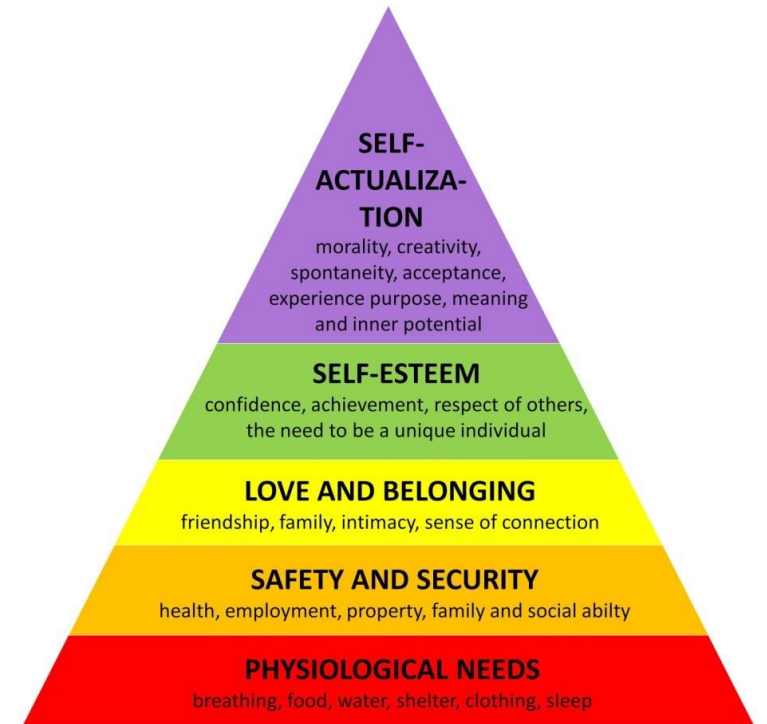
- Toilet training
- Speech and language
- Trauma
- Poverty

According to Teach early years (2024) they say that toilet training and inadequate housing are two straight forward examples. It is stressful enough to potty train, but imagine not having no hot water, or heating or no garden or washing machine. It is not just at home where there maybe challenges, there are many challenges during the time they start at a nursery or a school this being, staff ratios, safety measures, parent preferences such as sleeping routines. All staff need to be able to meet the child's needs for the child to develop in the best way possible.

Needs of the child:

Satisfying the needs of children requires acknowledging their uniqueness and tailoring their requirements accordingly. For us as practitioners to be able to care for the child, the focus needs to be on getting to know their likes and dislikes, mental process, and interests (Dowling, 2014). According to Maslow self-actualization and the willingness to study and succeed as a result (TES, 2019). However, Tes (2019) implies that there might be more complicated circumstances that must be considered. It is crucial for all practitioners to remember that this model may be viewed as biased and/or limited. Regular observations of the child will need to be made by the keyworker to make and give the child the best way to develop for the child's requirements as each child is unique. These observations can be both informal and formal.

Being inclusive through early years is paramount and according to birth to five matters (no date) agree that an approach to inclusion in the early years that is constructive will benefit all children's learning and development throughout their lives and will influence society at large. Equality for all children and staff will make the setting a better place to be a give the child the development needed that they need if everyone is included. Birth to five matter (no date) suggests at the core of early years practice must be a dedication to appreciating and respecting the diversity of individuals, families, and communities. There are still disparities in society, which have a significant impact on children's opportunities in life, health, and education. Early childhood environments are essential for addressing discrimination and prejudice in all its manifestations. By doing this, we will fulfil the mandate of the Equality Act 2010 which states that no family or child shall face discrimination based on any of the following protected characteristics: sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, marriage, or civil partnership. And the Best interest of child should always be paramount.



(Source: Simply Psychology, 2024)

ACTIVITIES

Ni direct government services (no date) says children learn about the world and about themselves via play. Additionally, they can build up relationships, career and academic qualities such as confidence and self-worth. Also, they suggest that children may naturally stay active, healthily and be joyful when playing. Play which is freely selected by the child promotes a healthy development of the child. from birth till young adulthood, they require a variety of unstructured play opportunities which develop healthy, physically, and mentally as well as their life skills. Bright Horizons (2023) suggests children learn through play in all domains of development including social, emotional physical cognitive and communication. They use these skills to practice and reinforce them in way which worksheets and screen time cannot match. According to Vygotsky's theory, play, learning and development all have a social component. Additionally, it highlights a value of play which is both child and adult initiated (Pacey, 2016). Through play children learn:

- Promotes healthy habits
- Natural stress
- Test new ideas
- Making their own decisions
- Promotes risk taking (bright horizons, 2023).

The curiosity approach:

Lyndsey Hellyn and Stephanie Bennet are the curiosity approach founders. They are the directors of six nurseries in the Midlands, all of which are built on the curiosity approach philosophy. They have over 50 years of combined teaching and leadership experience in early childhood education.



(Sources: Lovevery, 2024)



<https://vimeo.com/273462436>

LOOSE PARTS:



(Source: early impact, no date)

Nursery world (2020) suggests that in early years setting across the UK, loose-parts play theory is becoming increasingly popular, nevertheless, different settings seem to have a rather diverse conceptions about what it entails. It may at times be unclear what resources are considered “loose parts”. According to Only about children (no date) loose parts play can include empty boxes, rope, string, and pieces of wood. Also, they believe that a children’s self- directed creative and imaginative play is made possible by loose parts. These inexpensive resources can have a big impact on a child’s learning, development and growth when paired with time, space and the encouragement of concerned parent or carer. Louv. R (no date) says a ‘loose part’ toy is flexible, children may use their imaginations and creativity to connect it with other loose parts in a variety of ways. Nature continues to be the most abundant source of loose parts since it stimulates all the senses. Loose parts can boost social and problem-solving skills and support inclusion. There are lots of benefits to lose parts play these being:

- Increasing physical activity
- Enhancing cognitive skills
- Increasing focus and engagement
- Boosting natural curiosity
- Developing higher levels of critical thinking and problem solving (Only about children, no date)

Nursery world (2020) says some practitioners include recycled materials such as pipes, tubes and scrap materials, other limit loose pieces to only natural resources like branches and twigs. While some settings have been told to get rid of their plastic toys or metal toy vehicles because they are not ‘loose parts’ others have bowls of beads and coloured stones for loose parts play.

WATER PLAY:



(Source: Community playthings, 2012)

Community playthings (2012) suggests that sprinklers, puddles, and spray bottles all evoke happy childhood memories. Traditionally, early childhood educators have made the most of children's innate love of playing in the water by including it into the classroom or setting as a focus or setting it outside during warm weather. Unfortunately, water tables are becoming extinct due to the current concentrations on academics which is typified by workbooks and ditto sheets and children are spending less time in the outside. There are many benefits to water play, some of these are:

- Water play develops hand-eye coordination
- Introduces math's and scientific concepts
- Enhances concentration and focus
- Develops motor skills and sensory explorations
- Builds communication and social skills (Busy bees, 2020)

READING STORIES TO/WITH BABIES:



(Source: Raising children, 2023)

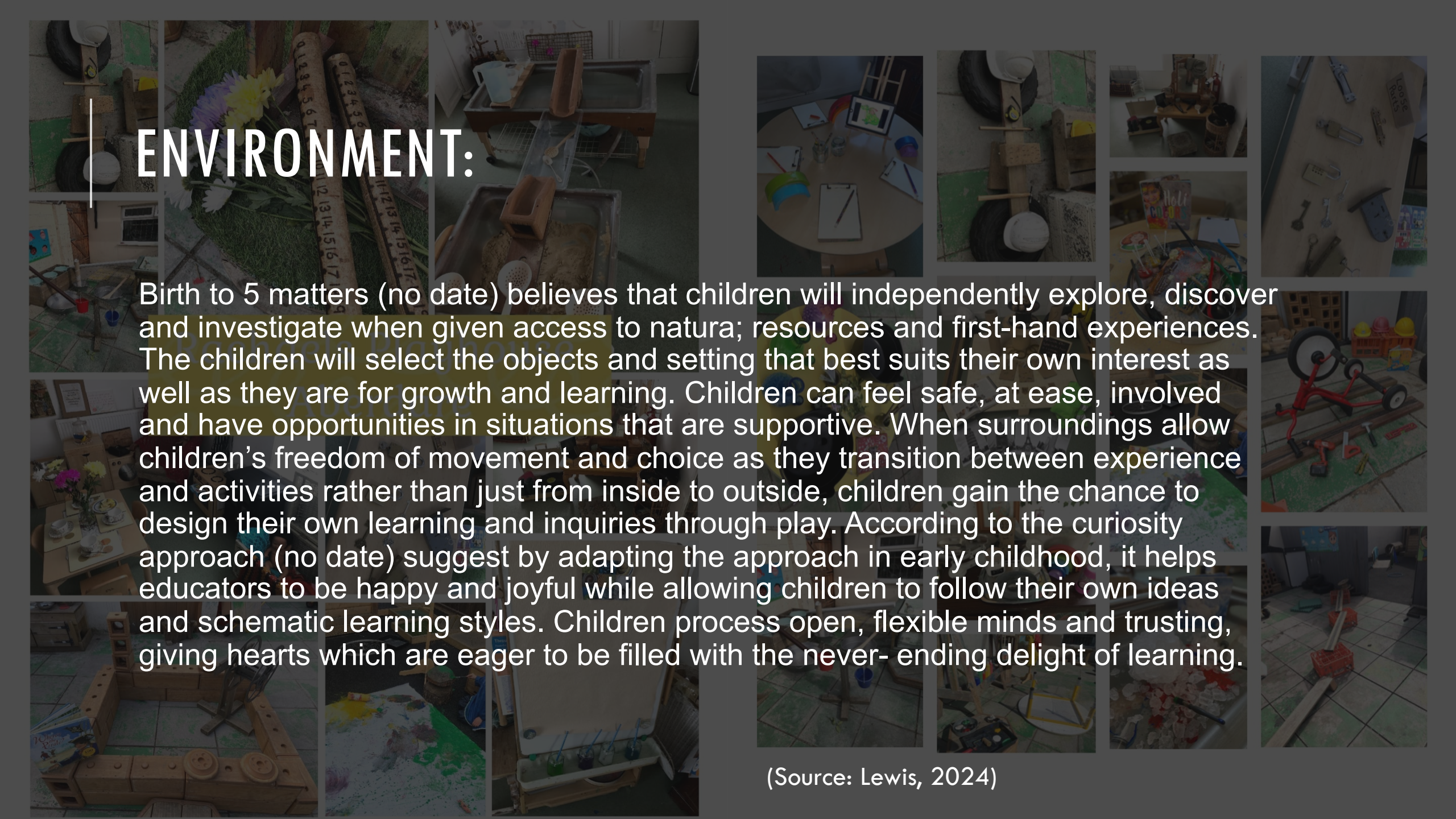
Kids health (2023) suggests your baby will be encouraged to glance, point, touch and respond to questions. Thinking abilities and social development are aided by this. By learning words, identifying pictures and mimicking sounds you child will develop their communication skills. There are many benefits to reading to babies from a young age, these being:

- Promotes bonding and fosters emotional connections
- Boosts brain power
- Introduces emotion (parents, 2022)

OUTDOOR PLAY



<https://vimeo.com/273465197>



ENVIRONMENT:

Birth to 5 matters (no date) believes that children will independently explore, discover and investigate when given access to natural resources and first-hand experiences. The children will select the objects and setting that best suits their own interest as well as they are for growth and learning. Children can feel safe, at ease, involved and have opportunities in situations that are supportive. When surroundings allow children's freedom of movement and choice as they transition between experience and activities rather than just from inside to outside, children gain the chance to design their own learning and inquiries through play. According to the curiosity approach (no date) suggest by adapting the approach in early childhood, it helps educators to be happy and joyful while allowing children to follow their own ideas and schematic learning styles. Children process open, flexible minds and trusting, giving hearts which are eager to be filled with the never-ending delight of learning.

(Source: Lewis, 2024)

WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOLS?



<https://youtu.be/5qCN0JHeR-Y>

Regular sessions at Forest School, a child-centered, inspirational learning environment, providing possibilities for holistic growth. The following is a long-term program that encourages risk taking play, and exploration. Through learning inspired hands-on activities in a natural setting, it fosters the development of confidence and self-esteem (The forest school, no date)

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