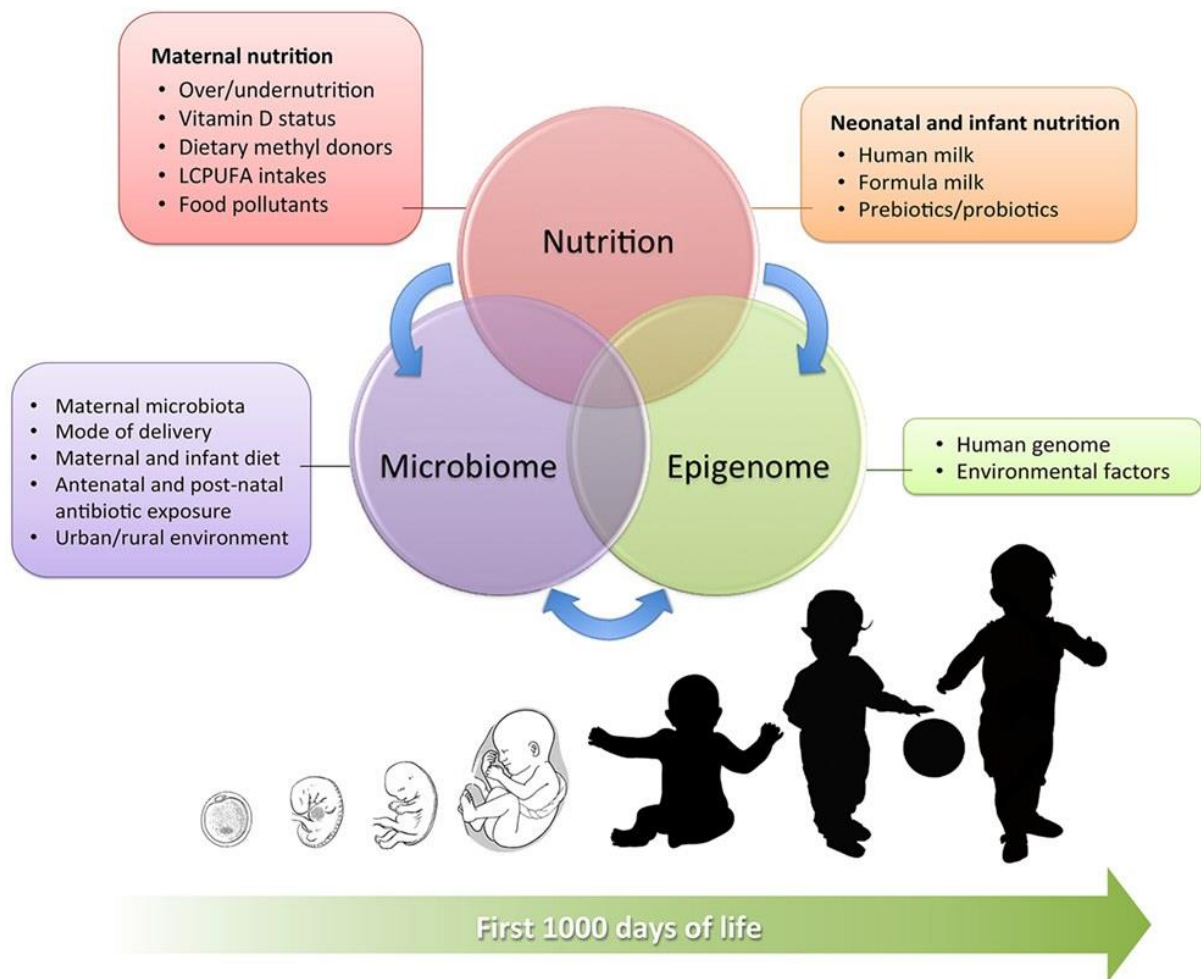




The First 1,000 Days.

Introduction



The aim of this handbook is to go into detail about the first 1,000 days of a child's life. I am going to be specifically talking about three sections of the first 1,000 days which are:

- From birth to six months old.

- The importance of a safe environment.
- The effects covid has had on toddlers (six months old - two years old).

This handbook is also going to be looking into detail about theorist about their theories on children's first 1000 days and the three key aspects this handbook is going to be talking about.

Why the first 1,000 days of a child's life is so important.



The first 1,000 days of a child's life is from conception to when the child is two years old. During this period of a child's life, it is crucial that the child gets what they need. The first 1,000 days are important because they impact the child's future and sets the child up for a healthy future. According to the Australian Government, (2019), the time from when a baby is conceived until the baby is 2 years old this is the time when the babies brain, body and immune system grows and develops the most significantly. A baby's brain develops the most during their first 1,000 days than any other period of their life. A baby's brain is also at its most fragile during this period, if the child is exposed to abuse, stress or even hunger this can impact the child for the rest of their life.

Whilst the mother is carrying the baby it is again crucial that the mother is keeping healthy for herself and for the baby to be healthy when given birth. According to the Australian Government, (2019) from doing research it tells us that whilst the mother is pregnant her health, nutrition and stress level could have an impact on the baby whilst the baby is in the womb and after given birth. Therefore, the mother must try to keep as fit and healthy for herself and for the future baby.

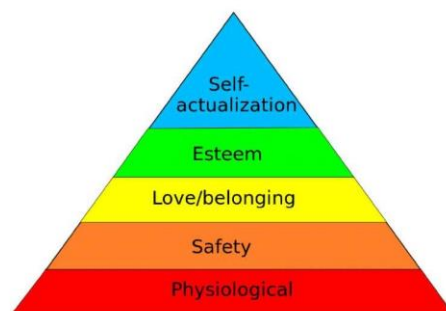
As a baby you rely on your parents or carers to do everything for you and to look after you correctly. For you to give your baby what they need you must:

- Provide the correct healthy food for the child.
- Give the child love and have a loving relationship.
- The child needs to know they are safe and secure, it is essential for a child to feel at ease and comfortable.
- Play games with your child, children learn through play.
- A healthy environment, this includes before birth and after birth.

Maslow's theory.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory



1 - Self-actualization- Self-actualization is at the top of Maslow's hierarchy. According to McLeod, (2020) during 1943 and 1954 Maslow stated that human motivation is based on people seeking their fulfilment and for them as a person to change through personal growth. People who are self-actualized are those which are fulfilled in what they are doing and pushing themselves to their fulfilment. This could include people's hobbies, learning different languages and people's creative pursuits. Maslow stated

in the 1970's that he estimated only around two percent of people would reach the state of self-actualization.

Esteem- According to Interaction Design Foundation, (2002) Maslow stated that there are several different components which you need to achieve the sense of self-esteem. To enable this for yourself you must:

- Respect others.
- Have an internal acceptance of who we are.
- Confidence in yourself.
- Achievement.

Having esteem as child is essential as it includes, encouragement if you are encouraged to do something it usually helps boost your confidence. You should be protected from any bullying and potential harm. As a child they should receive positive discipline and day to day learning life skills.

Social needs- According to McLeod, (2007) Maslow stated the third level of the human needs are social needs. This is where the child needs to feel loved and have a feeling of belongingness. The word belongingness refers to another human emotional need for interpersonal relationships, affiliating and being a part of a group.

As a child you need to feel unconditionally loved and have loving interactions with family members or carers which are in their life. As a child you also need room to explore different places and play with peers which are around you.

Safety and security- According to Interaction Design Foundation, (2020) "The need for safety was acknowledged as a basic human need by Abraham Maslow in his 'Hierarchy of Needs'. Safety needs represent the second tier in Maslow's hierarchy and these needs include the security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality of family, and of health."

Adult caregivers should be protecting the child from any potential danger. This could be with making sure the child has a car seat when travelling. Making sure their procedures in place in-case something happens to the parents, being above the poverty line and making sure you are receiving the correct health visits and health care.

According to Public Health NHS, (2022) poverty has negative impacts on many different key aspects during a child's life. Poverty has a negative impact on the child's health, social skills, emotional development, cognitive development and educational outcomes. It shows that children who are born into poverty are more likely to experience health problems, poor nutrition and chronic diseases.

Physiological- Physiological needs are the most essential needs we must have as humans to live. This includes water, healthy food, sleep, shelter and human touch. Maslow stated in 1943-1954 that people are motivated to achieve certain needs although some needs are more important than others. These needs are essential to anyone on a day-to-day basis and if these needs are not met the human body cannot function properly. Maslow considered physiological needs the most important

one on his hierarchy pyramid as all the needs become secondary until the physiological needs are met.



Pre-birth to birth.

Pre-Birth to Three
Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families

The Four Key Principles for best starts and positive outcomes are:

- Rights of the child
- Relationships
- Responsive care
- Respect

All staff working with babies and young children should be aware that these key principles are interrelated and interdependent.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/> You will also find **+glow** on the Early Years website where there are additional opportunities for Glow Users

During the stage of pregnancy is a crucial period as the baby's brain starts developing in the womb. A fully grown adult has estimated of eighty-six billion neurons although many of these neurons are formed whilst the baby is in the womb. The mother is responsible to keep the child healthy therefore, the mother should not be drinking, smoking and should be keeping fit and healthy for herself and for her child. According to Joseph, (2018) throughout your pregnancy your health care provider should be doing regular checks on you to make sure you and your baby are healthy. Your health care provider would also check your weight, blood pressure and be checking on the growth and development of your baby. The health care provider

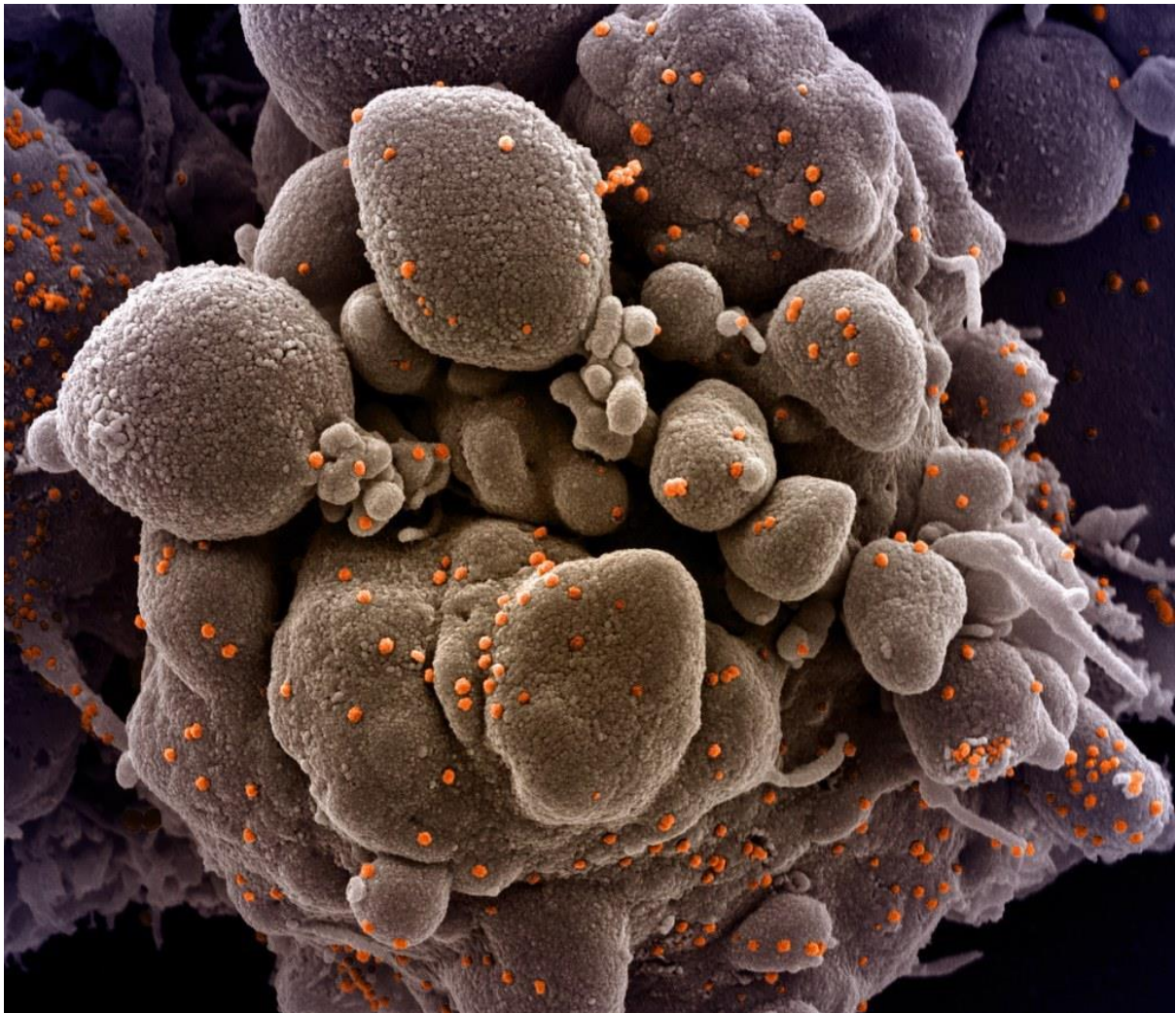
would do this by feeling your abdomen, listening for a heartbeat and measuring your stomach.

According to the Australian Government, (2020) the human brain has three main sections. The first section is the brain stem and the cerebellum, these connect the brain to the spinal cord. They also control the body's breathing rate, heart rate, blood pressure, your balance and your reflexes. The second one is the limbic system this sits on top of the brain stem and controls many different functions, which include emotion, thirst, hunger, memory, learning and the body's daily rhythms. Therefore, when you are a baby and when you are hungry or thirsty your limbic system reacts to that for the baby to cry and show that they need something. The last of the three main sections of your brain is the cerebral cortex, this consists of a left and right hemisphere this sits on top of the limbic system. The cerebral cortex includes four crucial parts of your body to be able to function properly.

- Occipital lobe which is for vision to enable you to see.
- Temporal lobe is for hearing, speaking language and social interaction.
- Frontal lobe if for your memory, self-regulation, planning and problem solving.
- Parietal lobe for bodily sensations like your pain threshold, pressure and your body temperature.

When your baby is born these three sections of your baby's brain automatically know what they are doing. you can help your baby's development when just given birth by doing simple things such as speaking to your baby and singing. You can also help by creating a stimulating environment with different objects around the baby to touch different things.

How covid19 has affected toddlers. (Six months- two years old)



Due to covid19 it has affected toddler's social skills, this is because they have had to stay in the house with parents/carers. This is hard for toddlers as they were not going out and experiencing the outdoor life. According to Dowling, (2006) getting outdoor experience through children's early years are crucial as children learn "the planned allocation of physical space, the use of display and the selection and storage of material resources". Another reason as to why exploring outdoors is crucial for children is because children can explore with the animals/ insects in the natural environment, feel different textures and listen to noises they would not hear indoors (birds, leaves crunching). It has also impacted on toddlers seeing other family members; therefore, they do not grow that bond with the family members they might not have met. Covid also would have stopped toddlers from going to day cares/parks where they would have interacted with other children the same age as them. As children develop a great deal during the first 1000 days it is crucial for them to interact with other people as they are not always going to be with the parents, they need to be comfortable around others as well. It is easier for children to adapt when they are younger rather than when they are older as they would learn that it is normal to go out, whereas covid has stopped this and it may be more difficult to send your child to day care when they are so used to being in the house with their parents.

It can be very overwhelming as it would be a big change for a child. This is where early years practitioners come in and when the parent eventually decides/can send their child to a day care or perhaps something else the practitioner would put in steps to try and make this transition as smoothly as possible for the child. According to Curtis, (2008) young children feel more relaxed in a setting which is a homelike environment compared to an institutional school setting.

According to Fearon, (2021) babies born after March 2020 will have only known the world in the start of a pandemic. The child might have not met anyone in their family other than their parents. Child born during this pandemic are certainly not having the same opportunities as children which were born before the pandemic. Due to covid and from research they believe children born during this pandemic will not have the opportunity to thrive, the first months and years of life are vitally important for the child's long-term health, development and wellbeing. During the first year of a baby's life their development takes place at an extraordinary rate this is when the babies brain doubles in size. During the first 1000 days the baby's brain is so fragile and the babies brain development depends crucially on their experience and in particular their social experience, this stimulates; tunes and hones in the brains unfolding architecture. A stimulating varied and responsive environment supports the development of language, cognition and emotional and social competencies. This depends on their environmental input which makes the brain flexible and capable of adaption.

According to Robinsons, (2011) in 2005 Oster believed, children need affective communication as this plays a crucial role in children's social, emotional and cognitive development. Due to covid children have not been able to interact with as many people as they would have, although children should receive this affective communication from their parents/ carers. Infants are per-adapted for social interaction and because of covid this might have delayed this development.

Birth- Six months old.



During a baby's first six months their skills develop a lot. This includes their gross motor skills, their fine motor skills, their self-help skills and cognitive skills. According to Children's Minnesota, (2022) throughout the six months their gross motor skills develop, this is their large muscles which include their legs, arms, trunk and neck.

- In the babies first month they start bobbing their heads when they are held upright and start kicking their feet when they're on their backs.
- In the second month when the baby is placed on their tummy's they lift their head briefly.
- In the third month the baby can lift their head two/three inches off the surface and is able to push up when they are placed on their belly's.
- In the fourth month when the baby is placed on their tummy's the baby can straighten their legs.
- The fifth month a baby can roll from laying on their tummies to their backs.
- The sixth month the baby can sit up briefly without support.

Fine motor skills-

This includes the small muscles such as hands and fingers. Throughout the six months the development starts from the baby's hand is clenched in a fist most of the time, this goes onto being able to hold objects when placed on their hands. The third month babies can reach for objects, babies are so interested in what is going on. This leads onto the fourth month when babies start to shake objects and want to touch things around them. In the fifth month babies start to try and reach for things and then the sixth month is when they pass toys from one hand to another.

Babies are so interested in what is going on around them and pick up on the smallest of actions we do or movements. This is where the self-help skills come into place. Throughout the first six months of a baby's life, they are observing what their parents/carers are doing and will eventually start doing little things they want for themselves/ pointing at objects they want. Throughout the six months baby's self-help skills develop a lot. From the first month of feeding from the mother to the sixth month of being able to hold a bottle by themselves. Throughout the six months the babies learn:

- Month one- feeding from the mother.
- Month two- opens their mouth when they can see a bottle.
- Month three- anticipates the feeding by showing excitement when they can see its feeding time.
- Month four- bringing toys to their mouth/chewing things.
- Month five- puts both of their hands on the bottle when feeding time.
- Month six- the baby starts feeding themselves, can hold the bottle with both hands.

Although, all babies and children are different, and their development will depend on how they are brought up. Throughout this period, you must give your child unconditional love and care. Babies rely on their carers for everything, everything the carers would be doing should be in the best interest of the child.

Babies link their movement and learning through the senses, this link is called Kinaesthesia. This sense of movement of our body is fundamental in self-development. According to The Journal of Physiology, (2009) "the term 'kinaesthesia' was coined by Bastian (1888) and refers to the ability to sense the position and movement of our limbs and trunk. It is a mysterious sense since, by comparison with our other senses such as vision and hearing, we are largely unaware of it in our daily activities".

Alison Gopnik's theory.



Alison Gopnik came up with an experiment called "broccoli-goldfish study". The psychologists gave fourteen- and eighteen-month-old babies a bowl of raw broccoli and goldfish crackers the babies would taste the food and would make faces suggesting if they liked the food or did not. After the babies tasted the food, the psychologist would then taste the food as well and would make a face suggesting if they liked the food or not. Sometimes the physiologists would do the same faces as the baby, although sometimes the physiologists would do the opposite reaction to what the child's reaction was. Alison Gopnik also did an experiment to see if the physiologist put their hand what the baby would give them, whether it was the food the baby liked or if it was the food the physiologist liked, and they found that it was more common for the baby to give the adult the food the adult liked not what the baby liked. Alison Gopnik stated that she believed from doing this simple experiment on a baby it showed that baby's/children can do a lot more than adults believe, by recognizing that someone else has a different perspective and taking that on board when they are dealing with the adult.

Cognitive Development.



Cognitive development includes how you think, the way you explore new/different things and how you figure things out. This development also includes your knowledge, skills and problem solving. Brain development is also a part of cognitive development.

According to McLeod, (2020) "Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that intelligence changes as children grow. A child's cognitive development is not just about acquiring knowledge, the child must develop or construct a mental model of the world. Cognitive development occurs through the interaction of innate capacities and environmental events, and children pass through a series of stages." According to Robinson, (2011) "cognitive development and experiences also play a role in the elaboration and refinement of emotions and emotional expressions".

There are four specific stages of cognitive development. This is what Piaget believed to be the four stages.

- Stage one: sensorimotor stage which occurs from birth- two years old.
- Stage two: preoperational stage which occurs when the child is two years old- seven years old.
- Stage three: concrete operational stage which occurs from seven years old- eleven years old.
- Stage four: formal operational stage which occurs from twelve years old and over.

According to Robinson, (2011) Piaget believed that there were three processes which are crucial for children moving from one development stage to another which are assimilation, accommodation and equilibration. "Assimilation refers to the way in

which new information is fitted in with existing ways of seeing the world, while accommodation refers to how these perceptions are adapted to make room for the new information, and equilibration encompasses both of the other processes. This is the cornerstone of Piaget's conception of how the child's internal world increasingly becomes allied with reality".

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