



The First 1000 Days.

Emily Morgan 2105738 ECEY4005 3023 words

Introduction

This digital scrap book will look at what exceptional care can look like and the current challenges of caring for an infant within a setting. It will take a holistic view of the care and development of the infant in the first 1000 days (from conception to their 2nd birthday). Furthermore, it will provide practitioners/parents with the knowledge and understanding they require to meet the complex needs of babies and toddlers (Brodie, 2018). This scrap book will look at why the first 1000 days are significant, the role of the adult, the needs of the baby, the importance of creating a nurturing environment, and partnership working. In addition, it will explore the different curricular and different pedagogy. Also, it will explore different theories that are associated with babies' needs and development.

It is important for babies to have positive experiences and have their needs met early on as negative experiences or prolonged stress could affect how they deal with new experiences in the future (Dowling, 2010). Campbell (2017) states that Maslow's theory of hierarchy suggests that development is most rapid between 6 months to 2 years in babies' and it is completely dependent on experiences.



1 - (Source: Cute-pictures, 2012)

Why are the first 1000 days significant?

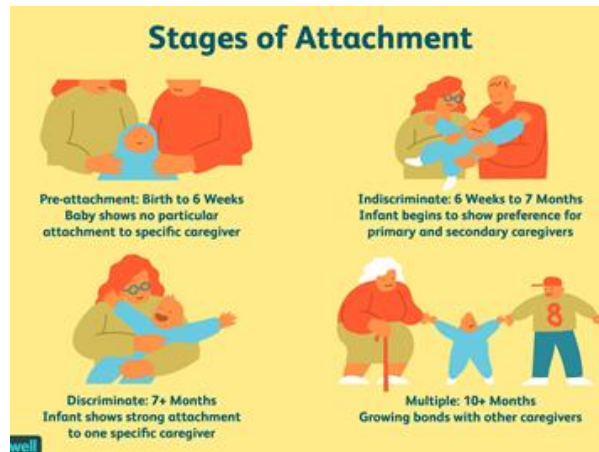
House of Commons (2017) state that the first 1000 days, from conception to the child's 2nd birthday, is a critical period. During this time, the baby is extremely vulnerable. It is the beginning of a child's health, cognitive, physical, social and emotional, and behavioural development. In addition, Barnardo's (2019) suggest that if a baby should fall behind during the earliest part of life, it is likely they will continue to fall behind in subsequent years compared to those who had a better start. House of Commons (2017) continue to suggest that what happens in a baby's early years, starting in the womb can have lifelong effects on their development. Karakochuk, *et al.* (2018) advises that it is important to consider a parent's health before conception and during pregnancy, as this can have an effect on the development of the baby. Furthermore, House of Commons (2017) Department of Health and Social Care agree with this and state that parents who are fit and healthy at the start of pregnancy tend to have healthier babies. A child's family, particularly their parents, and the environment in which they live can all contribute to their future health and development. Factors that may put their health and development at risk could be poor parental mental health, compared to good parental mental health, which could prevent negative outcomes, such as behavioural problems or poor academic prospects. Parents have a significant influence on a child's life during these early years (House of Commons, 2017). Factors that can influence a child's health and development are their parents;

- Mental health
- Physical health (Smoking, alcohol or substance abuse, and their diet)
- Education
- How they interact with their child
- Relationships

Should any of the above factors affect the child's parents, this can risk the parents ability to interact with their baby and prevent them from forming a healthy relationship, which is essential for the baby to form a secure attachment. Furthermore, it is beneficial to understand that to give the child the best start in life, intervention must begin before conception and continue throughout the child's life.

The Role of the Adult

Children will form strong bonds with their parents/primary care givers during the early part of their life. This is what we call attachment theory. Yassin (2020) states that Bowlby suggests the strongest attachment bond is between mother and baby, however forming strong bonds is still possible with multiple care givers. Bowlby suggests that when a healthy bond has not been achieved early on in the developmental stage - it can lead to different emotional problems for them later on and effect their development.



2 - (Source: Very Well Mind, 2019)

It is evident from the above picture that as a baby develops the bond between parents and secondary care givers continues to grow.

Bowlby identified 4 different styles of attachment -

- **Secure Attachment** - Babies who have secure attachments will have success in forming healthy relationships with others around them. This suggests a loving and warm bond between parent and baby, in return the baby will feel loved and nurtured. The baby is more likely to be confident and happy to explore.
- **Anxious-Ambivalent Attachment** - Anxious-ambivalent babies will often feel unloved and will struggle to express love easily in the future. They will often explore their surroundings with trepidation and may have a fear of abandonment.
- **Avoidant Attachment** - Children that experience avoidant attachments often have their needs unmet. They can grow up to feel unloved and struggle to understand emotions.
- **Disorganised Attachment** - Disorganised attachments are a combination of avoidant and anxious attachments. Babies may develop behavioural issues and find it difficult to control their emotions in the future.

A concept developed by Bowlby was 'Monotropy'. It signifies one main attachment figure. Bowlby concluded that if a successful 'monotropic' bond hasn't been made, then consciences could be negative in the future (Yassin, 2020).

What are enabling adults?

Welsh Government (2021) state enabling adults create emotionally safe environments and provide support and guidance. This ensures the baby feels relaxed and comfortable with their needs being met constantly. It also allows the baby to learn how to express their feeling and behaviours in positive ways. An enabling adult can provide exceptional care to a baby by being responsive to their

needs. In addition, having good reciprocity by responding to their likes and dislikes and have a joyful approach to learning. As previously mentioned, Maslow's theory of hierarchy suggests development is most rapid for babies between 6 months and 2 years (Campbell, 2017). Therefore, an enabling adult will begin to teach their babies as soon as possible.

There are many different pedagogies to consider. The Reggio Emilia approach is an international pedagogy focused on pre-school and primary education. It is child led and the adult is encouraged to learn alongside the child, involving themselves in group learning experiences, acting as a teacher and resource (Scholastic, 2021). The adult will continue to observe and track the progress of the child whilst taking time to reflect on what they have learned during the activity and about their teaching. Scholastic (2021) continue to suggest an important aspect of the Reggio Emilia approach is documenting the growth of both the child and the adult. Having photographic evidence of the child learning and playing with notes of their experiences can help parents and teachers learn what works and does not work for the child. Therefore, the necessary changes can be made. Much like Montessori's approach, great care is taken to create an environment that allows children the opportunity to explore their various interests. The use of 'real life' home objects such as, kitchen utensils, hairbrush, pot's and pan's prove successful - this is also known as a treasure basket (Scholastic, 2021).



3 - Reggio Emilia Education (Sprouts, 2019).

Reggio Emilia Education (Sprouts, 2019) states Malaguzzi suggests the Reggio approach encourages children to become risk takers, explorers and researchers by providing them with rich learning experiences. Allowing them to make mistakes builds confidence and encourages the children to work together and take others into consideration. Malaguzzi suggests that children have over 100 languages they use to communicate, such as;

- Talking
- Building
- Painting
- Whispering
- Singing and dancing
- Playing - 'It is the highest form of research' - Einstein (Reggio Emilia Education. Sprouts, 2019).

The Pikler approach.

Pikler's aim was to assure psychic and physical health in infants. She suggested that the way to achieve this was to form secure attachments (Marlen, 2021). Pikler found that giving respectful care was the best way to achieve these secure attachments, doing so will build a level of trust between parent and child. Pikler's approach to caring for infants combines two primary aspects of development: self-initiated, natural progression of motor development without adult interference; and supportive, attentive, and affection-based relationships (Marlen, 2017). One way parents can encourage risk in their babies is if a parent was to assess the environment and let the baby be independent, and free to explore with the support of the dependable adult this could help a child's motor development unfold naturally without direct adult interference (Marlen, 2017). In addition, children can develop independence at a very young age if they have adults who enable them (Welsh Government, 2021). However, the Pikler approach was often disrupted by well-intentioned parents who would encourage their children to walk, sit, or stand before they were ready to do so (Marlen, 2017).



4 - *Pikler House - A day in the Pikler House* (Pikler USA, 2018)

Pikler House - A day in the Pikler House (Pikler USA, 2018) show the benefits of children taking a nap outside. They state that all rooms have direct access to the garden to offer the children the opportunity to spend as much time outside as possible. *Pikler House - A day in the Pikler House* (Pikler USA, 2018) continues to suggest that children experience more freedom to explore being outside than inside.

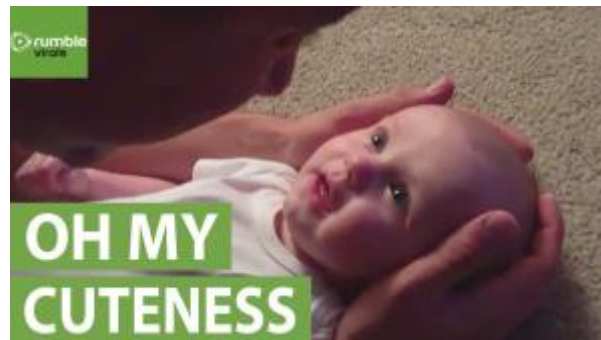
The Needs of the Baby

Understanding that every baby is different and therefore so are their needs is vital in ensuring their needs are met correctly (Dowling, 2014). The Hierarchy of Needs is a theory by Maslow depicting the needs of an individual. The basic needs at the bottom for instance, being fed and watered, change of nappy, and comforted must be met in order for the needs at the top to be fulfilled. McLeod (2018) states it is vital for babies' needs to be met in order for them to feel nurtured, build self-esteem, and develop fully.



5 - (Source: Simplypsychology, 2018)

Keenan and Evans (2009) suggest communication is vital in building a good relationship with a baby, as interaction and close relationships is what builds and helps the babies brain develop. An adult brain has an estimated 86 billion neurons - these are the information processing cells in the brain. The majority of them are formed whilst still in the womb. During infancy, the connections between neurons become stronger and more extensive, with new connections forming (Price *et al.* 2018). Adults can support babies development by helping build these connections through enabling experiences. They should allow the baby to be free to explore, which will help with their independence (Welsh Government, 2021). Adults can achieve this by providing challenging activities, providing stimulation, letting the baby socialise, messy play, and singing.



6 - Baby girl has emotional reaction to daddy's singing (Rumble Viral, 2015)

Baby girl has emotional reaction to daddy's singing (Rumble Viral, 2015) shows how babies can respond to adults when singing to them. Babies react to touch and facial expressions; they react automatically to information they receive. It is these experiences that help shape the babies brain. In addition, everyday routines are important for babies; they become familiarised, and it gives them a sense of security and stability (Kaplan, 2021).

If Adults continue to sing, talk, or read to their babies this can help with their cognitive development, as Vygotsky believed children learn from interactions with others around them and that language was a significant part of this (Kurt, 2020). Furthermore, he believed that interaction with others more skilled and intelligent will support cognitive development. Vygotsky was responsible for the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This theory is often known as scaffolding in early years. It is based on what a child can do currently and what they will be able to do with help. The theory demonstrates the interaction between individuals, both experienced and less experienced.



7 - (Source: Sites.google.com, 2021)

In contrast to Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, Piaget considered children's development as more of an independent process. He suggested that development was a result of an individual's ability to adapt to new experiences. However, like Vygotsky, Piaget believed that children learn and develop from being able to explore the environment around them. The theories of Piaget are incorporated largely in the Foundation Phase in Wales.

The Importance of Creating a Nurturing Environment

Having a well thought out learning environment that is nurturing and inclusive is crucial in aiding children's development (Our Family Wizard, 2021). Caring for children in non-maintained settings can be challenging, therefore, having an environment that is homely and full of objects children can explore and activities to partake in will help them learn and develop. Our Family Wizard (2021) believe that children feel comfortable in environments that are familiar to them, like their home for example. Having play kitchen's, play shop's, or dolls and toys that they may have at home will act as a sense of comfort for them and can make a positive difference to them.



8 - (Source: Early Years Resource, 2018)



9 - (Source: Pinterest, 2015)

Play is a large part of a child's brain development and for their communication and language skills to mature. Their World (2021) believes play should be fun and engaging and give children the opportunity to explore. Furthermore, play has behavioural, social, and psychomotor rewards. Hutt (2002) suggests that practitioners/parents should let play time be child-led and allow them to explore their different interests, as it is crucial in enriching learning and contributing to their development.

The Children's Trust (2020) state sensory play encourages children's development of motor skills and coordination and can be a positive bonding opportunity. Sensory play is a game or activity that stimulates any of the senses. A few simple sensory activities that can be enjoyed inside or outdoors include -

- **Play dough** - Many children enjoy the feeling of play dough between their fingers and like to form shapes.
- **Rainbow bubble foam** - Children have the chance to explore the foam bubbles, make pretend ice creams, and wash their toy cars.

- **Rice play** - Rice play encourages the development of fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Empty plastic bottles can be used to make shakers. Add in kitchen utensils or pots and pans and allow children to use their imagination.
- **Making music** - Use of pots and pans, or containers with rice or beads in them allows children to express themselves with sound and music.
- **Painting** - Making hand and footprints using paint allows children to be creative.



10 - (Source: Dr.Oetker, 2021)



11 - (Source: Busytoddler, 2016)



12 - (Source: HodgePodgeCraft, 2013)

The Reggio Emilia approach encourages outdoor learning, it suggests that like the indoor classroom, the outdoor classroom successfully engages children through design, flow, and use of materials

(Biermeier, 2021). By enabling environments outdoors, it allows children the opportunity to nurture their learning by providing rich experiences. The environment is seen as the third teacher; rich in materials, and can spark curiosity, creation and discovery Reggio Emilia Education (Sprouts, 2019).



13 - (Source: Pinterest, 2021)



14 - (Source: Teachwire.net, 2016)

The use of outdoor objects like tyre's for example, or different textures of metal allow children to be creative and explore.

The Reggio Emilia approach has influenced the creation of the foundation phase curriculum. The new curriculum in Wales suggests that care and education become integrated within settings (Welsh Government, 2021). They encourage creating a space that actively listens to the voice of the child and making all decisions child centred. Professional love is encouraged in nursery settings as this allows practitioners to form close bonds and build relationships with the children (Pacey, 2016). Dr Jools Page from the University of Sheffield conducted research on professional love to gain an understanding of the problems that arise for practitioners within nursery settings. Expressing loving emotions towards the young children is often met with anxiety from the practitioners, especially in the light of the media's exposure of safeguarding cases. However, the data demonstrated that the majority of practitioners have a positive attitude towards the role of 'professional love' as part of their practice in the nursery setting (Pacey, 2016). Professional loving practices such as; hugging and using sensitive touch can help bond and build attachments (Pacey, 2016). Professional love is also

providing respectful care. This could look like feeding the children, changing their nappies, or cuddling and nursing them off to sleep.

Inclusion is crucial in any early years settings as it allows children, with all different capabilities equal opportunities to learn and develop (Waller, 2009). It is beneficial to take on board the different needs of the children when planning out the environment or the curriculum, to ensure that all children feel included and are able to learn. Furthermore, it will allow practitioners to provide additional support or equipment to support the child.

Partnership Working

Hostettler Scharer (2018) suggest that relationship-based approach to caring for infants in nursery settings is beneficial in ensuring the child is central to all decisions made by the nursery, parents, and other care givers. When there is good communication between all parties this builds professional relationships and helps gain trust. In addition, it ensures there is a solid plan in place to aid the children's holistic development. There could be many different professional relationships needing to be formed by the parents, such as with nursery setting staff, health visitors, doctors/nurses, and staff from other settings. If the child has additional needs then parents may need to liaise with speech and language specialists, occupational therapists, or other health professionals.

Early Intervention Foundation (2021) state when identifying any problems or struggles a child might have, it is crucial to intervene early to prevent problems from occurring or being able to tackle them head on when they do. Ways in which early intervention can be demonstrated include, home visiting programmes to ensure vulnerable parents are supported, or setting-based programmes to help improve a child's social and emotional needs and development. Early Intervention Foundation (2021) continue to suggest that early interventions prove most effective when offered in the child's early years.

Conclusion

To conclude this scrapbook, exceptional care looks like meeting a baby's needs, supporting them, and being nurturing towards them. Providing them with enabling experiences to support their holistic development (Welsh Government 2021). Being aware of all current curricular and taking on board different pedagogies in order to provide the best support and facilitate the child's development and give them the best possible start in life.

Reference List

Barnardo's. (2019) *Changing the Lives of Children and Young People Across the UK*. Available at: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Barnardo%27s%20Impact%20Report%20Full%20-%202019.pdf> (Accessed: 7th January 2022).

Biermeier, M.A. (2021) *Inspired by Reggio Emilia – Designing the Outdoor Classroom*. Available at: https://www.udemy.com/course/outdoorclassroom/?utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=udemyads&utm_campaign=LongTail%20la.EN%20cc.UK&utm_content=deal4584&utm_term=.ag.119325868774.ad.532713168370.kw.de.c.dm.pl.ti.dsa-1212271230479.li.1007460.pd.&matchtype=&gclid=Cj0KCQjA8vSOBhCkARIsAGdp6RTXsarApebGt7JlpXjV92jWxyce-PwBZrxmilpR3A0fSWgXVKUX0aAkzfEALw_wcB (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Brodie, K. (2018) *The Holistic Care and Development of Children from Birth to Three: An Essential Guid for Students and Practitioners*. Oxon: Taylor & Francis Group.

Busytoddler. (2016) Available at: <https://busytoddler.com/2016/03/rainbow-rice-sensory-bin/> [Digital Photograph]

Campbell, L. (2017) *The Hierarchy of Needs in Babies*. Available at: <https://howtoadult.com/hierarchy-needs-babies-12183.html> (Accessed: 5th January 2022).

Cute-pictures. (2006) Available at: <https://cute-pictures.blogspot.com/2006/11/cute-babies-01.html> [Digital Photograph]

Cute-pictures. (2012) Available at: <https://cute-pictures.blogspot.com/2012/04/mothers-day-photography-greetings-mom.html> [Digital Photograph]

Dowling, M. (2010) *Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development*. 3rd Ed. London: Sage.

Dowling, M. (2014) *Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development*. 4th Ed. London: Sage.

Dr.Oetker. (2021) Available at: <https://www.oetker.co.uk/uk-en/recipe/r/playdough> [Digital Photograph]

Early Intervention Foundation. (2021) *What is Early Intervention?* Available at: <https://www.eif.org.uk/why-it-matters/what-is-early-intervention> (Accessed: 13th January 2022).

Early Years Resource. (2018) Available at: <https://www.earlyyearsresources.co.uk/blog/2018/05/play-kitchen-benefits/> [Digital Photograph]

HodgePodgeCraft. (2013) Available at: <https://www.hodgepodgecraft.com/10-amazing-handprint-craft-ideas-for-kids/> [Digital Photograph]

Hostettler Scharer, J. (2018) 'How educators define their role: Building 'professional' relationships with children and parents during transition to childcare: A case study', *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 26. PP. 246-257.

House of Commons. (2017) *First 1000 Days of Life*. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhealth/1496/1496.pdf> (Accessed: 7th January 2022).

Hutt, J. (2002) *Welsh Government Play Policy*. Available at: <https://www.playwales.org.uk/eng/walesplaypolicy> (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Kaplan. (2021) *Why Routines Are Important for Infants and Toddlers*. Available at: <https://www.kaplanco.com/ii/why-routines-are-important-for-infants-toddlers> (Accessed: 10th January 2022).

Karakochuk, C.D et al. (2018) *The Biology of The First 1000 Days*. Florida: Taylor & Francis Group.

Keenan, T. and Evans, S. (2009) *An Introduction to Child Development*. 2nd Edn. London: Sage.

Kurt, S. (2020) *Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development*. Available at: <https://educationaltechnology.net/lev-vygotsky-sociocultural-theory-of-cognitive-development/> (Accessed: 10th January 2022).

Marlen, D. (2017) *EYFS Best Practice: All about...Pikler*. Available at: <https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/features/article/eyfs-best-practice-all-about-pikler> (Accessed: 9th January 2022).

Marlen, D. (2021) *The Pikler Approach: Part 1*. Available at: <https://www.teachearlyyears.com/under-2s/view/the-pikler-approach-part-1#:~:text=Pikler's%20aim%20was%20to%20assure,main%20tools%20for%20achieving%20this.> (Accessed 9th January 2022).

McLeod, S. A. (2018) *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> (Accessed: 10th January 2022).

Our Family Wizard. (2021) *Helping Children Cope With Big Transitions*. Available at: <https://www.ourfamilywizard.co.uk/blog/helping-children-cope-big-transitions> (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Pacey. (2016) *'Professional Love' in Early Years Settings*. Available at: <https://www.pacey.org.uk/news-and-views/pacey-blog/2016/july-2016/%E2%80%98professional-love%E2%80%99-in-early-years-settings/> (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Pikler USA. (2018) *A day in the Pikler House* [Video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm5qTT6CQS8> (Accessed: 9th January 2022).

Pinterest. (2015) Available at: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/21sunshine21/role-play-shop/> [Digital Photograph]

Pinterest. (2021) Available at: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/577586720940269928/> [Digital Photograph]

Price, D.J et al. (2018) *Building Brains: An Introduction to Neural Development*. 2nd Edn. Hoboken: Wiley.

Rumble Viral. (2015) *Baby girl has emotional reaction to daddy's singing* [Video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Dh3vGN IVA> (Accessed: 10th January 2022).

Scholastic. (2021) *The Reggio Emilia Approach*. Available at: <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/reggio-emilia-approach/> (Accessed: 9th January 2022).

Simply Psychology. (2018) Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> [Digital Photograph]

Sites.google.com. (2021) Available at: <https://sites.google.com/a/bvsd.org/lucinda-schuettpeiz/growth-mindset-1> [Digital Photograph]

Sprouts. (2019) *Reggio Emilia Education* [Video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7n2hCebmT4c&t=2s> (Accessed: 9th January 2022).

Teachwire.net. (2016) Available at: <https://www.teachwire.net/news/8-reggio-emilia-inspired-activities-for-outdoor-learning-and-play> [Digital Photograph]

The Children's Trust. (2020) *Summer Sensory Activities*. Available at: <https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/brain-injury-information/latest/summer-sensory->

[activities?gclid=Cj0KCQiA8vSOBhCkARIsAGdp6RSKZ5KARrDW1GeL94V50pXyxFBCINZULR69EiDOdJ0rb3R_mxcQj_kaAj2-EALw_wcB](https://www.google.com/search?q=activities?gclid=Cj0KCQiA8vSOBhCkARIsAGdp6RSKZ5KARrDW1GeL94V50pXyxFBCINZULR69EiDOdJ0rb3R_mxcQj_kaAj2-EALw_wcB) (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Theirworld. (2021) *Learning Through Play (Early Childhood Development)*. Available at: <https://theirworld.org/explainers/learning-through-play-early-childhood-development> (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Very Well Mind. (2019) Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-attachment-theory-2795337> [Digital Photograph]

Waller, T. (2009) *An Introduction to Early Childhood*. 2nd Edn. London: Sage.

Welsh Government. (2021) *Curriculum for Funded Non-Maintained Nursery Settings*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/curriculum-funded-non-maintained-nursery-settings> (Accessed: 11th January 2022).

Welsh Government. (2021) *Enabling Pathways – The Period of Learning Leading to Progression Part 1*. Available at: https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2021-05/enabling-pathways-consultation-document_0.pdf (Accessed: 9th January 2022).

Yassin, F. (2020) *What Are The Different Types Of Attachment?* Available at: <https://thewaveclinic.com/blog/what-are-the-different-types-of-attachment/> (Accessed: 8th January 2022).