

First 1000 days of life - BLOG



1 - Conception

*A healthy pregnancy sets a unborn baby for a healthy life, as the weeks progress and the baby grows inside the womb. During the period from conception to the age of two, babies are uniquely susceptible to their environment. The first 1001 days of the child life is a critical period for developing communication and physical skills, some babies have a disability diagnosed but some children will have a developmental need and this is very likely to develop into a special education need but in some cases it could take longer for the needs to be identified, early diagnosis can improve long term outcomes. Fetal brain development starts before you even realise you've conceived. When you're just 5 weeks pregnant, the first neural cells begin to divide and differentiate into neurons and glia. **Public health England's 2016 Giving every child the best start in life. 1***

Also at about week 5 of pregnancy, the neural plate folds onto itself to form the neural tube, which closes by about week 6 of pregnancy to eventually become the brain and spinal cord. When the pregnancy reaches 10 weeks the brain will be small, smooth and structured. Over the next few weeks the baby brain will develop more and this will enable the baby to start stretching, yawning , and sucking by the end of the first trimester. The brainstem that controls the vital function like the heart, breathing and more coordinated movements in the second trimester. There are many different services available to support families throughout pregnancy and as the baby is born and the months to follow. The NHS Long term plan Was first published in 2019 and this will set out to improve the quality of patient care and health outcomes. 2

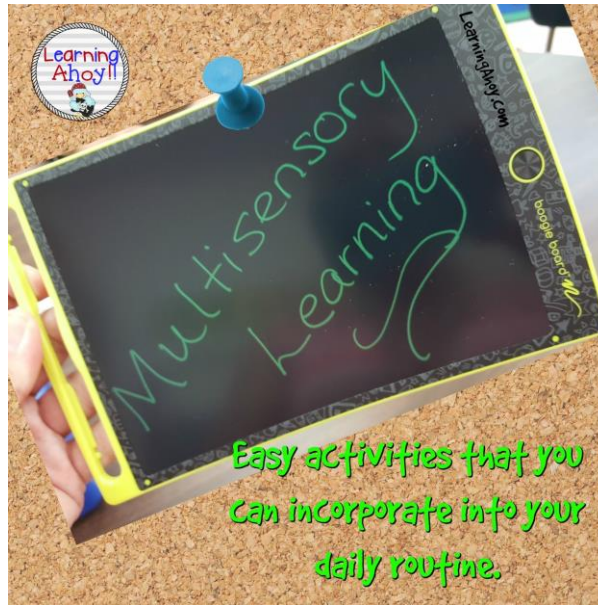
As the baby grows inside the womb the foetus is susceptible to the environment around the mother and also will hear the sounds the mother hears and also what the mother will consume the baby will Also consume. As the baby is in the womb the umbilical cord which connects the baby to the mothers placenta, and this cord will carry nutrients and oxygen in to the baby body and also it will carry the waste out.

Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that children move through four different stages of mental development 3

Please find the attached video of a foetus growing inside the mother body. 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhUOKTPW7L0>

When the brain is fully grown it is estimated that 86 billion neurons which are cells processing information but most of these are formed in the womb (Herculano-Houzel 2009, Goswami 2015). During infancy, neurons connections become stronger and more extensive, and also when new connections are forming from the networks that underlie children's development. 5



2 - Importance of Sensory

From birth children are exploring their senses and processing new information this will help them make sense of the world around them and as they engage in sensory it will help the brain develop for learning, babies will learn that they can identify objects by touching this will help them develop their motor skills and they will start squeezing ,pulling and throwing objects. As they will get older sensory will support their language development and this will encourage them to communicate while playing. Sensory play will encourage and they will discover and independent thinking and it will inspire imagination and creativity it has been researched that sensory play can benefit a child's development and learning in many different ways.

1. The sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years)

The sensorimotor stage of Jean Piaget's theory spans from birth to 2 years. at this stage they will learn through their five senses and also exploring the environment. At this stage you can encourage development by giving children sensory play which will have different textures and activities that can make different sounds. 6





3 - <https://youtu.be/7e7QzOVkl-Y> 7

Please see the video link above.



4 - When the baby is in the Mother's womb, music can play a important role in the child's growth. When you expose the child to music it will ignite in all areas of the development and when it is started at a early age it will help the child grow.

When the pregnant woman listens to music it will be soothing for her, but also a positive influence the unborn baby, around 16-18 weeks pregnancy the baby will hear the first sound, When a child hears a lullaby this will make your baby calmer as it will slow the heart rate down.

[Does Music Affect A Fetus? - YouTube](#) 8

When music is being played to a pregnant woman it has been proven that it plays a role in the brain development before the child is born. When the woman is pregnant it will be soothing and uplifting effect for her and then the positivity will be passed on to the unborn baby.

Music will also help soothe the baby when they are small and it also could become a bedtime routine for them.



5 - Most new mums will have to return to work when the child is at a young age anywhere from 6 months old to a year old, some earlier or later, and in some circumstances where the extended family cannot help with childcare, the child will have to attend a day nursery or childminding setting.

Most of the practitioners will be aware that the first 1000 days are critical to every child's wellbeing and development and they will be very wary of this while that child is in their care.

They will ensure that all healthy snacks and meals are provided and exercise and fresh air as this will play a big part in the child's health. They will make sure the child is cared for and feels safe, that they are happy or seem happy, by making sure they provide them with lots of love and attention. They also will do this by keeping the child's development ongoing by doing different types of activities with them.

The parents and practitioners will form a close relationship with each other, as leaving your child is a big and scary step, so there must be elements of trust and friendship with the any setting provider that the child attend. and this will help them share information or if the parent needs any help or advice then the practitioner can help. When the child will join nursery the practitioners will go over and beyond to look what sparks the child interest and makes them happy when the child is happy we have happy parents, this also helps the children settle and be happy to come through a door which a big milestone for the children and parents to see. We must remember that every child is different and they all will do and say things in their ways and also in their own time,

Practitioner also play a vital role as they will assess the child as they develop, they begin assessing as soon as they meet the child, some informal assessments and some formal assessments, if the child is not reaching their milestones then the practitioners will ask the parents to come in to have a chat and share if they are happy to the findings as per the assessments and then with the parents consent, practitioners can work alongside and with different outer agencies to put the best possible steps in place to help the child and the parents with their next steps in development.



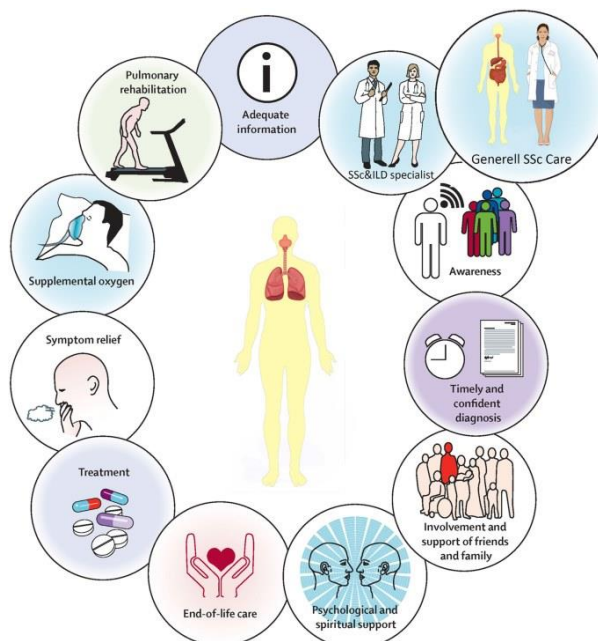
6 - For a baby and a young child the environment should be stimulating and filled with safe objects and equipment and that the child always has freedom of movement, and that you can provide a variety of experiences.

Please find the attached

[enabling-pathways-consultation-document 0.pdf \(uwtsd.ac.uk\)](#) 9

Care Inspectors Wales (CIW) States in the minimum Standards the environment is one that encourages children to be confident, independent and develop their self-esteem, to respect others and develop a sense of what is right and wrong. All children should have the opportunity to be active if they are indoors or outdoors, the environment will encourage the child to become independent and confident and this will develop their self-esteem. Every child that has different experiences and self-directed play and also unstructured play will help them emotional, social and physical development.

10



7 - When a holistic learning approach is imputed in Early Years this will emphasize the importance of the child's well-being of the child in the Early childhood, this will help them connect to the world around them.

The 5 aspects of Holistic Development in EYFS are as follows. 11

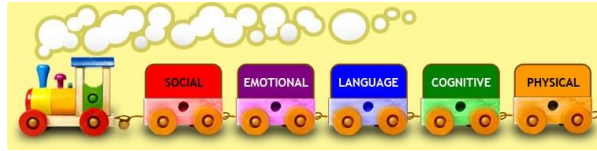
- Physical
- Emotional
- social
- spiritual
- Intellectual

When the Practitioner takes a holistic approach to the child's development they will pay attention to the above, and it is important that when they are planning and assessing that the needs of the child are taken into consideration, this will allow you to assess as an individual and understand what they have achieved instead of what they haven't with the evidence the practitioner can link up and how progress in one area can affect another area. This will also allow the practitioners plan for the future activities involving the child, and this will help in their overall learning, development and wellbeing.

.Please watch the video below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBkYPVa6ho8> 12

The overall holistic development means that it will develop the Mind, body and spirit of the person.



8 - Theorist

Jean Piaget(1896 - 1980)

Constructivist theory 13

Piaget believes that a child will go through four development and this will start from birth and it will follow to maturity. There are four stages which are,

- *Sensori - motor stage (Birth to 18/24 months)*
- *Pre- operational stage(18/24 months to 7 years)*
- *Concrete-operational stage (7 to 11 years)*
- *Formal operational stage (11 years)*

It is important that you have a good understanding of theories as it will help with planning and delivering appropriate practice in development,

Piaget was a 'Constructivist' and this means that his theory is that that theory was based on belief that the child 'construct' their thoughts and what their understanding of the world is based on experiences. In Wales Piaget's theory has had a influence on the current EYFS and foundation phase, as the practitioners understand that children will learn to their full when they are exploring a stimulating Environment.

Vygotsky's

Lev Vygotsky (1896 - 1934)

Social Constructivist theory 14

His theory is based on that language and cognitive development go hand - in -hand, and that then the child will develop understanding. Vygotsky believes that the child will develop but will come to a point where they will no longer learn anymore. At this point the child will be in the 'Zone of proximal development' 10 and this is when the scaffolding process will start and it will help them learn the skills to move forward.

Vygotsky does not agree with Piaget that a series of stages ,but more a gradual process of the child's development.

Albert Bandura (1925

Social Learning Theory

Bandura theory added a social element, he argued that by watching other people you can learn things like behavior and take on new information, this is known as observational learning

Correct format of reference list should look like this:

Reference List

Department of Health and Social Care [\(2019\) NHS Long Term Plan Launched](#). Available at: [NHS Long Term Plan launched - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) [Accessed: 19th April 2022].

Discovery (2011) *Does Music Affect a Fetus?* [Video] Available at: [Does Music Affect A Fetus? - YouTube](#) [Accessed: 19th April 2022].

Gov.uk (no date) *Health matters: giving every child the best start in life*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-giving-every-child-the-best-start-in-life> [Accessed: 19.4.22].

Reference List – First 1000 days of Life

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Article title: Health matters: giving every child the best start in life

Website title: GOV.UK

URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-giving-every-child-the-best-start-in-life>

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URL: [Fetal Development Week by Week Overview](#)

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Author: Rachel R. Romeo

Article title: Socioeconomic and Experiential Influences on the Neurobiology of Language Development

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Article title: What Is the Sensorimotor Stage of Cognitive Development?

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