



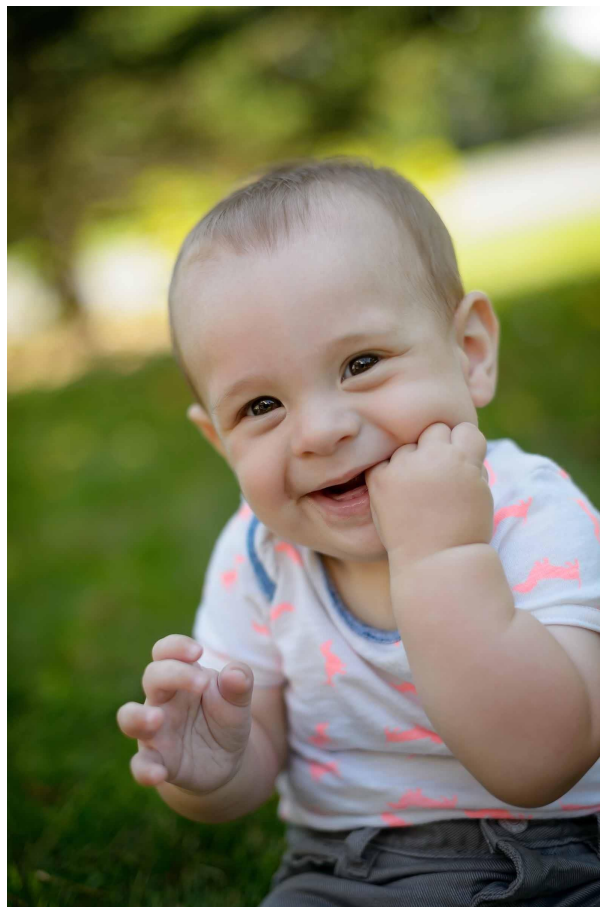
The First 1000 Days

Introduction

what is the first 1000 days?

The first 1000 days is a time frame from when a child is conceived until two years old. A mother's health, nutrition and stress levels during pregnancy can affect your child's later life.

According to Bushell (2020) the first 1000 days is when a woman is responsible for developing their child's future and their lives.



Why is the first 1000 days significant?

A human's brain continues to develop through their lives but the brain develops rapidly between conception and the age of two. (Cusick and Georffieff, 2013)

The first 1000 days is the most critical time in a child's life, from conception to their second birthday. The first 1000 days opens a numerous amount of opportunities to be able to create a healthy future. The way a child is cared for during this time has a large impact on the way a child's brains develops. (1000days, no date)

HmGovernment believe that services have not matched the child, parent or carers needs and this must change. therefore HmGovernment have now taken it upon themselves to make sure children from conception to two years of age have the best start to life as this is the most critical time for a child. (HmGovernment, 2021)



communication

"communication for children should be age-appropriate and child friendly" (Kolucki,B and Lemish,D, no date)

According to Kolucki and Lemish (no date) children should communicate with children the same age and use child friendly equipment to benefit the child's development in language and the express themselves. Kolucki and Lemish (no date) also believe that children communication should be positive to develop their self-confidence and for the child to become self aware, independent and free.

communication right

Kolucki and Lemish (no date) believe that children should have communication right which includes being heard and taken seriously. Giving children the ability to be heard increase their confidence and allows children to gain respect from older generations. Kolucki and Lemish believe children should be recognised to be able to express their own thoughts and feelings and have their own rights.



Enabling

Welsh Government (2021) believes that a child's development improves by the environment the child is surrounded by. According to Welsh Government, when children are given the time to explore their environment it gives children the opportunities to widen the child's experiences. Practitioners need to consider the space the child is in and also the child's environment.

According to Early Years Alliance (no date), a place that has been created to be warm and welcoming can instantly become an engaging and comfortable environment for children. Early Years Alliance believe that children develop well to new activities when a range of resources are offered. Early Years Alliance believes that the activities offered to the children must have a purpose. Role play allows children to use their imagination and improve their cognitive development and creativity. their social skills with peers and practitioners titters will thrive in environments that allows them to play freely, such as , role play.

According to Welsh Government (2021) the role of the adult is critical for a child's development and learning needs. Adults set examples for children, therefore, children are more exposed to copying an adult. Welsh Government believes that adults who set a safe and warm environment for children, have more of a positive relationship with their children. Welsh Government agree that, a child's development deepens to an understanding when an adult observes and respond positively to a

situation. Practitioners should have an understanding of a child's likes and dislikes, therefore, practitioners are able to successfully meet the child's needs, Welsh Government.

'Giving children a wide range of stimulating experiences has a vital influence on their development, from communication to role play' (NurseyWorld, 2017).

According to NurseryWorld (2017) children who have had experiences from a young age are more likely to become more confident over time and expand their use of language earlier. NurseryWorld believes this is more common with children that have been exposed to communicating with adults from early in life, such as, parents talking to them, outside family members and nursery groups.



Relationships

According to European Research Network (2013) the relationship between a parent and practitioners has a large influence on a child's development and behaviour. According to Buehler, et.al. (2022) children observe adult models which shapes the child's attitude and communication. This happens from a young age as children are mainly exposed to adult figures, such as, parents or further family members. According to McLeod (2007) having a secure relationship with family is critical for a child future development through their early years of life. McLeod believes that having a loving relationship with family allows the child to experience what love truly is, therefore, children can expand their experiences once they start a school environment and start socialising with peers and practitioners.

According to Morin (no date), having a good relationship between families and practitioners has a positive outcome on the child. Morin suggests ways of helping the families feel more welcomed in the setting such as, working with the families to meet the child's needs, meeting the families before the child starts in the new setting and the practitioner has to seem interested in the child by asking questions about the child to, again, be able to meet the child's needs.

On the other hand, Morin (no date) tells us that, practitioners have to be more aware in the setting. By having a good relationship with the practitioners, it prevents the child from lying about the practitioner. If a child is upset, practitioners have to be more aware about how they respond to a child, if they hug the child while confronting them, it is an easier way for a child to lie and say they have been inappropriate.

'36% of teachers said they felt that relationships with parents are better now than before the first lockdown' (Mullin, no date).

Mullin (no date) suggests that standing at the gate in the morning and greeting the children is the best welcoming for them, as it can be a very challenging part of the day, saying goodbye to their

parents, therefore, having someone greet them can make them feel welcomed and have a positive impact on their day. Mullin also suggest that this is a positive strategy for the parents, as saying goodbye and seeing their children upset leaving them can also have a sad impact on the parents, therefore having someone greet them can reassure the parents that their children are in a safe environment.



Development

According to ClevelandClinic (2020) during each trimester of pregnancy, you will see a change in development, not only with the fetus but also with yourself. ClevelandClinic tells us that in the first trimester, your placenta will develop, therefore the fetus will be fed. During the first few weeks, ClevelandClinic (2020), the baby's face will start to develop, including a shape forming for the eyes. Along with the face developing, the mouth and throat will start to develop, blood cells start to take shape and the baby's heart tubes will beat 65 times per minute. During the second month, according to ClevelandClinic, the face will continue to develop, including the nose and ears. Along with this, the arms, legs, fingers and toes will develop. The baby's spinal cord and central nervous system is fully formed by the second month of pregnancy. ClevelandClinic (2020) tells us that the head starts to grow and by this time, the head is slightly bigger than the body and the baby, by now, is 1 inch long.

The second trimester starts from the fourth month of the pregnancy. ClevelandClinic tells us that at this time the heart beat is clear to hear and you can now clearly see the fingers and toes.

ClevelandClinic (2020) continues to inform us that, all the necessary parts of a human, such as, hair, eyelashes and hair will start to form and the baby will start to develop strength to stretch and yawn. During the fourth month, the baby will start to move around in which the baby carrier will be able to feel the movement, such as, kicking. By the 17th week of pregnancy, you'll be able to tell what the sex of the baby is, ClevelandClinic (2020). From the 21st weeks through to the 24th week, if a baby is born premature, they can survive with a lot of care.

The final two to three months, according to ClevelandClinic, the body fat of the baby will continue to develop and is fully mature. In the final month, at anytime you can go into labour and at this time you can feel less movement because the baby is starting to position itself ready to enter the world. ClevelandClinic (2020).

According to NHS (2020) a baby should be weighed, up to six months, once a month. At the start of a baby's life, it is normal for a baby to lose weight in the first couple of days. NHS tells us, a baby gain the most weight in the first six to nine months. As they become toddlers, the child's growth will slow down.

NHS (2020) tells us how to handle difficult behaviour:

- Do not give up
- Do what feels right

- Be consistent
- Do not overreact
- Talk calmly
- Be positive
- Offer rewards
- Avoid hitting

NHS (2020) tells us that baby's tend to cry when they are hungry or want attention. Baby's find it hard to understand, therefore, they need time and reassurance.

According to Nidirect (no date) outdoor play is important for a child's health and fitness and helps the brain to develop. The freedom of the outdoors can help a child develop their experiences in coordination, balance and strength as they can climb things and explore their environment. Children have the ability to use their voice and let off steam when they are exploring different environments, Nidirect (no date). Every child should have freedom to the outdoors as not every child is academic, therefore, outdoor play gives children the chance to gain self confidence and develop in their own way. Nidirect (no date).

'During baby's first 12 months of life, their 5 senses develop at an incredible rate' (Allaboutchildren, no date).

AllAboutChildren (no date) tells us that most adults take senses for granted. According to AllAboutChildren, children's senses develop slowly during the first year of their life. AllAboutChildren (no date) agree that, in the first couple of days of a baby's life, baby's do not see completely clearly, until at least 2 weeks, when baby's can start to see in colour. From birth, AllAboutChildren (no date), tells us that, baby's can detect their parents' voices. Children's hearing develops slowly, therefore, from 6 months on, they can start to recognise everyday sounds and recognise other voices, such as, family or people they are surrounded by everyday. Once baby's start to use their touch senses, baby's tend to touch their surrounding regularly and touch anything that they are surrounded by. According to AllAboutChildren (no date) when children start on solid food from milk, their taste buds become exposed to different taste and they start to become aware of what they like and dislike. 'Baby's are born with a full sense of smell' (AllAboutChildren, no date).

According to Help Me Grow (no date) it is important for children to adapt to cognitive development from the minute they are born. Help Me Grow tells us that this is important because it helps form a foundation for the child's later school life.



Babies in lockdown

Lockdown was a challenging time for everybody in the world but *BabiesInLockdown* (2020) suggests that this was the hardest time for any parent that was pregnant, giving birth or having children start nursery/full time school. *BabiesInLockdown* (2020) tells us that many children that were born during covid or were meant to start nursery/school have had a huge impact in they academic life as being stuck at home for months on end, without seeing anybody but they immediate family, is challenging. *BabiesInLockdown* suggests that baby's that were born in lockdown will develop slower than any other child as they didn't have the opportunity to go to baby groups or play groups for the first few months they were born. Babies that were meant to start in 'big' school never had the opportunity to meet new people in nursery, therefore, starting in a new environment would have been even more challenging for them. *BabiesInLockdown* (2020).

BabiesInLockdown (2020) suggests, one of the most challenging parts of being pregnant in lockdown, especially for first time parents, was not being able to go to classes, as well as mothers not being allowed to have their parents in the room while having check ups or even giving birth.



New curriculum

According to WelshGovernment (2021) the new curriculum that has been set in place, is essential to the child's development. WelshGovernment tells us that, the new curriculum has been made in a positive setting in order to allow children to adapt to the curriculum, therefore, children find it easier to develop to the environment. WelshGovernment (2021) agrees that, most children find the change from one setting to another, such as, from nursery to school, a challenge. Therefore, it is the practitioners responsibility to encourage the child to adapt to the new environment. The most common ways of doing this would be:

- Home visits
- Allowing the child to have half days in the school
- Staying in contact with parents
- Interacting with the child and parent

WelshGovernment (2021) tells us that children and parents need to be reassured when starting in a new environment. The five key development pathways that allows this to happen would be:

- Belonging
- Communication
- Exploration
- Physical development
- Well-being



Conclusion

The first 1000 days is significant to any child because it helps their development in the future. The first 1000 days allows the child to understand communication, not only with family, but with people that surround them on a daily basis. Relationships with practitioners in nursery setting is important for the child to learn how to develop relationships with someone that is not their family and for the child to feel comfortable in a new setting. The new curriculum allows families to be more involved and have more of an understanding to the environment that they are leaving their child in, which allows families to feel safe and the child to feel welcomed.

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