EXCEPTIONAL CARE IN THE FIRST 1000 DAYS

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What is The First 1000 Days and Why is it Important ?

The first 1000 days of a child's life are important as this is when the foundations are laid for their future. This starts from conception to when the child reaches the age of two and a half years old. There are three vital steps in a child's first 1000 days, these are Pregnancy, Infancy and Toddlerhood. Tellmebaby (2020) claims that the first 1000 days are important because even though all children grow and develop at their own individual progress, the first 1000 days have the most important influence and impact on their development. According to Moore, T. et al (2017) throughout the first thousand days from the developing foetus up to a two-and-a-half-year-old child. This is when they are at their most malleable

but most at risk. Even from conception the foetus is receiving feelings and messages from the mother’s physical and mental state. They will adjust their bodily structures to be more suitable for the environment that they will be born in to. Additionally, H M Government (2017) also believes that this period is a crucial time. As this period of time lays down the foundations for the individual child's cognitive, emotional and physical development. According to Mcloed, S. (2022) Vygotsky believes that a child is born with basic abilities such as memory and perception. These mental abilities will grow and mature through the effect of social interactions.

What is Exceptional Care and Why is it Important ?

What is Exceptional Care?

To give exceptional care to a baby or a toddler is especially important. Public Health England (2016) claims that throughout the first thousand days or the first two years of the child's life the brain presents a marvelous capacity to soak up information and they are able to adjust to their surrounding environments. Furthermore, Public Health England (2016) says that to guarantee children are prepared and primed to learn and be equipped for good life chances, the baby and child should have positive early experiences.

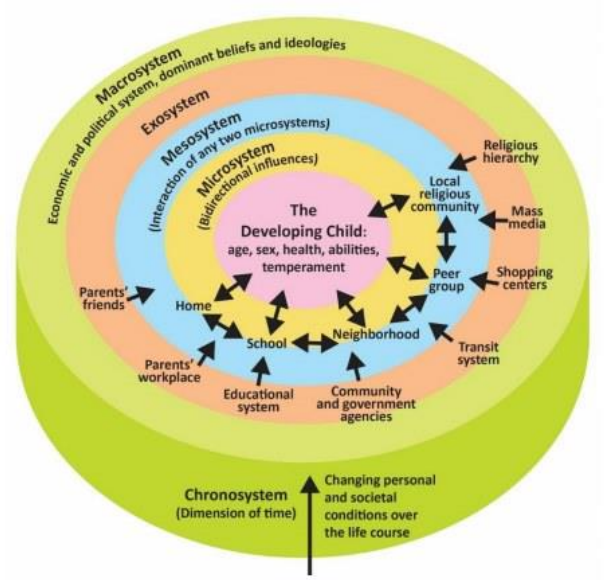
Marsh, L. (2021) believes that the main factors for which a baby or a toddler should be given to thrive are love, food (nutrition) sleep, daily care, stimulation for their senses, room to roam, inspire new challenges and just as important for the parent or carer to take care of themselves. Firstly, Marsh, L. (2021) believes that all children need love. By giving the baby/toddler love, attention, and tenderness this will help the baby's/toddler's emotional, physical and mental growth. To help establish a secure emotional bond Marsh, L. (2021) also believes that whenever it is possible give the baby/toddler attention even they are upset . Secondly, Marsh, L. (2021) says that a baby will get all the nutrition that they need from their milk whether it is breast milk or formula milk. Then as the baby grows and is ready for the weaning period which should be around the six-month age. The baby should be encouraged to eat as many fresh fruits and vegetables to get as many nutrients and vitamins as they need. Thirdly, Marsh, L (2021) says that it is essential that the baby or child in your care feels comfortable. If the baby is too warm or needs a change of nappy, make the changes as soon as possible so that the child is comfortable and can continue with observing, learning, and developing. Finally, Marsh, L (2021) believes that communication with the baby or child is the most efficient and important way for the baby to develop into confident children and then into adults. Every chance that appears the care giver should interact and talk to them especially at nappy changing times and feeding times when it is one on one with the baby or child. The babies will react and try to respond whether it is just a smile or a noise of some sort.

Effective Environment & Enabling Adults

According to Early Years Matters (2023) the environment is an important part of assisting and increasing a baby or child's development and learning. This is because an effective environment will help babies and children play because they feel safe and at ease in them. Early Years Matters (2023) says that the environment should be welcoming, engaging and suitable for the children who will use it. To illustrate this point Education Wales (2022) points out that for babies and children to learn and be able to express their feelings and behaviors they should be in an emotionally safe environment. Education Wales (2022) also states that the setting should be organized and planned out extremely well so it can support and nurture the growth and development of either a baby or child notions either indoors or outdoors. An

equally important aspect is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory according to Guy-Evans, O. (2020). These Ecological Systems are based on the baby and child's development in certain environments and relationships with adults other than their parents. These theories show that if the baby or child has a strong bond with certain adults, this will have a positive effect on the baby or child. Additionally, Hrf (nd) also states that Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory of a Child's Development is important also if the relationship between child and adult is negative as the outcome would be different. Hrf (nd) maintains that a baby or/and child can be affected by their environmental settings and their connections to certain adults too. Hrf (nd) state that the main environments that can affect the baby or child are the Microsystem and Mesosystem. The microsystem is the environment that has the most impact on the child, as it is in this, that the infants' first relationships with adults begin. Hrf (nd) claims that these relationships with parents , other family members and other care givers are the most powerful as these can have a two-way impact (bi-directional). This means how the adults treat the child and then how the child treats the adult in response. Hrf (nd) also states that the mesosystem is where the adults that are in the child's microsystem have relationships with other adults that do not have an immediate relationship with the infant such as a teacher or a day care worker. If these relationships work together harmoniously this will have a positive effect on the child's development. But if the adults do not work together this could cause negative effects on the child's development.

According to Early Years Alliance (2019) an enabling environment should be a place where children feel sheltered and safeguarded from abuse and harm. The environment should be inviting, warm and provide a sense of belonging to the children. Early Years Alliance (2019) also suggests that there should be a vast range of activities for the children to partake in. These toys and activities should also be age appropriate. Furthermore, the Welsh Government (2022) believes that the settings should celebrate and encourage a strong Welsh ethos.



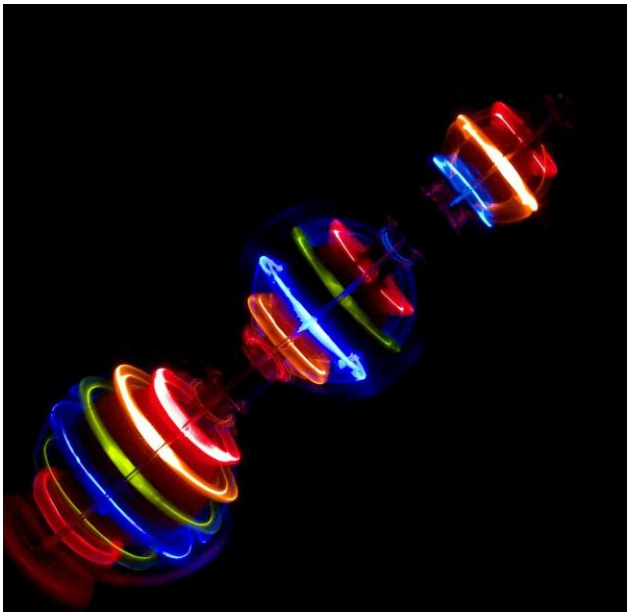
Activities and Play

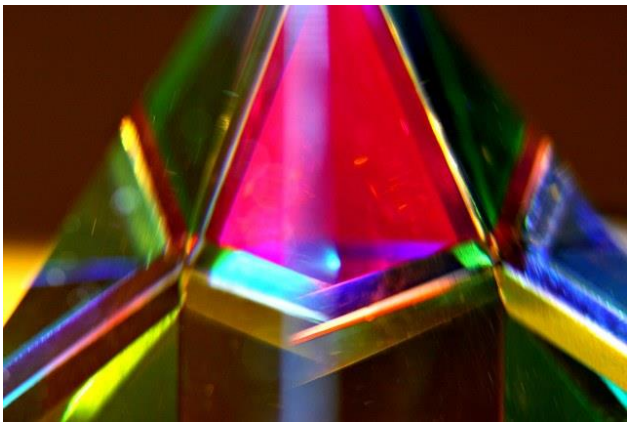
In any activities that are introduced to babies and infants the most important factor of this is FUN. The more fun the child has the more the child will be captivated and soak up what he or she is doing. The National Day Nurseries Associations (2021) believe that to achieve the most from the baby or child that is in their care the adults should provide Engaging Experiences in Effective and exciting Environments. The ndna (2021) are convinced that these three enablers should be used in every setting. The Welsh Government (2022) says that any experience that we provide for the babies and children in our care should be relevant, significant, and purposeful to the child. They should motivate and inspire the child's independence. The child should be provided with some challenges and then be able to experience accomplishments and achievements as their learning journey continues. The Welsh Government (2022) also believes that the experiences that the child has should be as genuine and as true to real life as possible.The ndna (2021) are convinced that the experiences that the child receives should help them link experiences together to evaluate them and then to combine what they have learnt from them. Family lives (2022) points out that children use all their senses when they learn new things. They touch, look, hear, smell and taste everything. They observe everyone near them and mimic their behavior. Bandura labeled this behavior as Observational Learning in his theory of social learning. Education Corner (2023) suggests that for observational learning to occur it does not have to be in real life. This copying could be what the child has seen on television programmes or video games. It cannot be denied that the Welsh Government (2022) claims that children should have access to unrestricted resources such as digital media to improve their development and growth. Also, Education Corner (2023) points out that observational learning can be done from verbal instructions too. The Welsh government (2022)

believes that all children should have access to multi-sensory activities and experiences provided for them by their nursery settings. These multi-sensory activities can help children understand how things work. Additionally, the Welsh government (2022) also states that through these activities the children will be able to be aware of their surrounding environment and begin to comment on it.

Visual Activities

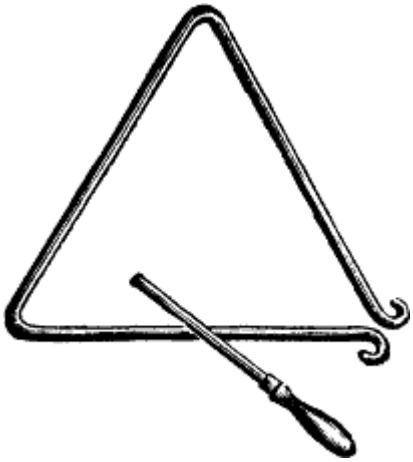
First Discoverers (2022) says that from birth babies are drawn to brightly colored toys and objects to look at. Sight is one of the most significant sense as it is used in all of the child's activities. Schoolhouse (nd) believe that reading is an essential part of growth and development as this stimulates the child's brain cells. This then makes them stronger, and they connect to other brain cells. Stimulating a child's brain cells will help a child achieve to become a better listener and reader. Additionally, Healthline (2022) says that reading to a baby or child provides an amazing chance for the bonding process to start.





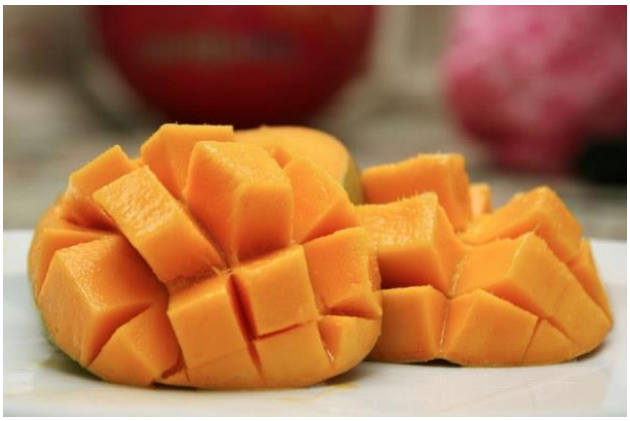
Auditory Activities

First Discoverers (2022) claim that focused auditory sensory activities are a wonderful way of increasing children's listening skills. These could be from listening walks, playing musical instruments, and playing different genres of music to them.



Tasting Activities

First Discoverers (2022) says that taste sensory activities are a superb chance for children to investigate a variety of different tastes and textures, these can include sweet, sour, bitter, savory, and salty tastes.



Smelling Activities

According to First Discoverers (2022) children's sense of smell is closely linked to their sense of taste, additionally it is connected to to their cognitive development. First Discoverers (2022) also point ouut that it is connected to memories and emotions.

Johnson's
baby
powder
silky soft skin

Tactile Activities

Furthermore, First Discoverers (2022) believes that there is a lot more to activities than just messy play even though it is an important activity for children to partake in. First Discoverers (2020) argue that some children do not like the feel or sensation of these activities, especially activities that have textures like gloop or spaghetti.

Indoor Play

Early Years Matter (2023) points out that indoor environments should be comfortable, attractive and be age relevant for the child or children who use it. The recourses should be brightly colored and as interesting as possible to attract the attention of the children. Early Years Matter (2023) also points out that the space indoors should be planned out effectively to assist with the baby's or child's growth development. Witty D (2019) says that according to the Pikler collection, for a child to be able to have the best advantage of motor development growth. The child should be permitted total freedom of movement and allowed to be in control of their own physical attempts, for instance, when the baby tries to roll over. Do not help the baby, they need to learn how to do it themselves so they can do it unaided in the future. Natalie (2021) says that the theorist Maria Montessori valued the importance of freedom of movement also. The environment should allow the baby or child to move and develop at their own pace. Natalie. (2021) also suggests that babies and toddlers develop their growth. Toys should be of natural materials and resemble real life objects. The toys should also be able to instruct the children if they are not being used correctly, for instance, putting round shaped blocks into the relevant holes.

Outdoor Play

According to Nursery Stories (2021) outside activities can arouse and encourage children's curiosity and introduce a love for learning. With the correct instruction and advice all children can grow to respect and value nature and the aspiration to look after the environment. Additionally, Nursery Stories (2021) points out that outside activities help children with their physical movement and developmental growth. This helps the child with their motor skills. GOV.UK (2021) also states that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework says that physical activities are essential for a child's holistic development. By introducing activities outdoors this enables children to develop their core strength, their balance skills, stability, and co-ordination.

ETHAN
ALLEN

RAINBOW
EXIT

Being Inclusive

What does this mean?

This means to provide all children with the same opportunities and supporting them during the earliest and most valuable time of their life. As it states in Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) that the child's best interest should be paramount.

Lee, E (2022) believes that being inclusive is not just helping babies or children with disadvantages or those that who have special needs. The inclusive ethos should incorporate all children without question. This will allow each baby and child to reach their full potential. Additionally, Thomas, K (2022) also believes that the word “inclusive” means that everyone has the right to the same activities and resources. Thomas, K (2022) states also that it is about producing equal opportunities for everyone regardless of their background. This means every child will have an equal chance to grow and develop. Thomas, K (2022) also says that inclusive practice unites different backgrounds, cultures, religions, disabilities, and special educational needs. It is a procedure of ensuring that each individual feels like they belong in the nursery setting. Furthermore, article 2 in the UNCRC (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) (1989) also states that this is applicable to every child regardless of gender, race, language, religion, and ethnicity.

Current Challenges

Current Challenges

Theorist Friedrich Froebel identified the significance of play for children under seven years old. He believed that play is the way children would understand their world better by having direct experiences with it. In 2012 Froebel's Trust was established with this in mind.

Froebel's Trust (2012) states that in the last few years children have not had the opportunity to play as they had previously. More time has been centered on school lessons, less time on playing. More time using electronic devices like Ipads and game consoles. In spite of this Froebel's Trust (2012) points out that as this has been happening, more parents, care givers and practitioners have been utilizing Froebel's principles to help guide the children in their care and nursery settings. As a result of using these principles Froebel's Trust (2012) claim that the Froebian principles include unity and connectedness. Everything in the universe is linked to each other. When the children have a better understanding of this, they will develop a greater deeper understanding of themselves and everyone and everything around them. As every individual child acquires knowledge holistically and learning should never be categorized. Furthermore, Froebel's Trust (2012) also believes each child is an unique individual and they learn and develop when they do things for themselves, also the children will learn to reflect on their actions.

unique [yoo-neek]

adj. having no like or equal; unparalleled; incomparable

i am unique

International Approaches

According to Child Time Inc (2017) there are some differences in how a child setting situated here in the United Kingdom to a Forest School in other countries. Firstly, in a UK school the lessons are led by a teacher in a classroom. The lessons are prepared by the teachers and set out in front of the children. Child Time Inc (2017) also states that some of the children's schoolwork is saved and sometimes displayed. There are also set times and routines, and everything is based on learning and knowledge. However, Child Time Inc (2017) state that with a forest school based with the Reggio-Emilia approach teachers and children learn together plus the classroom is often described as the third teacher and plays an especially important part of their learning and development. Child Times Inc (2017) also points out that children can seek out their own activities and interests and any evidence of their work is used to reflect on them. Each day, follows the child on whatever interests them, so each day is different. Also, Child Times Inc (2017) says that most importantly children are the focal point as being members of their community.

Berg, V. (2021) claims that some forest schools use the Reggio-Emilia philosophy approach. This approach makes the child the main focus. It is where the child is seen to be able to show their knowledge and understanding by being curious, creative, and always encouraged. Berg, V. (2021) believes that every child is a unique individual and learns and develops in dissimilar stages.

Dearnley, R. (2022) believes that the Te Whariki approach is a new and an original way for children to grow and develop also. Dearnley, R. (2021) points out that the words “Te Whariki” means “woven mat”. Which is symbolic as it is seen to represent the weaving of all the foundation principles together. Dearnley, R. (2022) says that the Te Whariki approach does not use any guidelines for topics to be taught or any times or structures to the school day. Dearnley, R. (2022) also states that the child is also at the centre of the curriculum and always considers the child's well-being, learning and respect for cultural values.

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