



The First 1000 Days

Introduction

Pregnancy, Birth and Baby described the first 1000 days of a child's life from the moment they are conceived up until they reach the age of two years old. During this time the babies' brain, body and immune system is significantly growing and developing. There is a short video from UNICEF that gives a brief explanation on the first 1000 days <http://1000days.unicef.ph> It is very important to make sure when pregnant the women look after her self and everything she does before the baby is born will have an affect on their health and development. During the first 1000 days is when the wiring of the baby's brain is at the most important stages, a pregnant women's actions can determine whether they help to increase a babies IQ or decrease it just by making sure she is having a healthy and nutritious diet. Babies can also hear from in side the womb so by allow time to sit and listen to music and by talking to the baby regularly can also have a positive effect on their

development and it can also help to form a strong bond between the baby and mother through the nine months of pregnancy. Creating a special bond when pregnant will help to give the baby a sense of security when they are born and they will look to their mother for reassurance in everything they do from that day on. Throughout the first 1000 days it is an important time for babies' development and by knowing how to support them before they are even born will give them a better chance in life. Babies require good healthy food throughout pregnancy because this will have an impact on their health as well as their brain development which is explained in more details further down in this document. A baby needs to have a lovely relationship with their parents so that they feel love and safe, when a baby is feeling loved and safe, they are more likely to try new things and develop many skills. One skill that will come from feeling safe and secure is play, babies learn through play and Dewey (no date) theory is that babies learn through doing which is a sentiment develop also by Froebel.



During the first stages

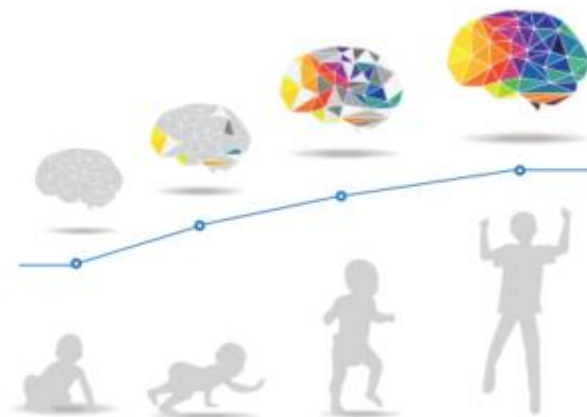


Marple, K explained that when a woman first finds out she is pregnant the fetus goes through two stages before it becomes a fetus, the first stage is a blastocyst and then it will turn in to a maturing embryo before finally being a fetus. The fetus is around five weeks old before there is a hear beat, and at twenty-seven weeks the fetus will then start having a sleep and wake pattern and then finally at thirty-nine weeks the baby is physically developed. At six weeks is when the brain starts to develop and at eight weeks the nerve cells are starting to branch out that form primitive neural pathways and their breathing tubes are now growing from their throat to their developing lungs. By ten weeks the baby has completed the most important portion of development. When the baby reaches thirteen weeks that is when their veins and organs can be visibly seen through scans and if the baby's gender is a girl, then her ovaries will already contain over two million eggs. Once the baby reaches fourteen weeks their brain impulses are beginning to start and their using their facial muscles and their kidneys have started to work at this stage too. Nineteen weeks is when the baby's senses are starting to develop, and they can start hearing their mothers voice but it only at twenty-three weeks when the baby's ears are stronger and are more able to hear familiar voices and sounds which means this is an important stage for creating stronger bonds. At twenty-six weeks is when the baby starts to breath in and out amniotic fluid which helps to develop the baby's lungs and they are starting to practice their breathing skills ready for their first breath at birth. Twenty-seven weeks is when the babies brain starts to become a lot more active and becomes stronger each day. Once the baby gets to thirty-five weeks, they have fully developed kidneys, and their liver can now start to process some waste products. The woman can go into labour from thirty-seven weeks and the baby is then considered full term and is less likely to suffer any health issues caused from early labour.

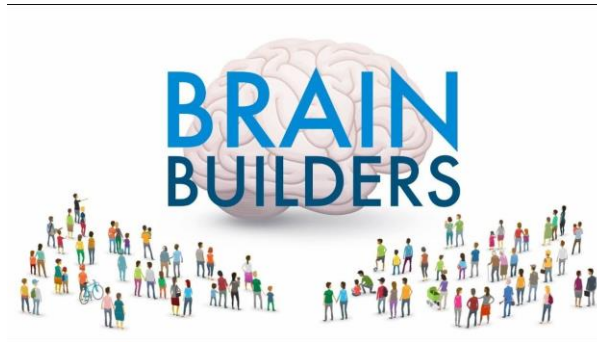
[The first 1000 days diagram](#)



Brain Development



The brain's growth and development are normally developed in the very early stages of life, and it is normally before they turn two that the important structure and capacity of the brain's development really sets in. There is a wide range of factors that have an important impact on the brain's development but in Sarah E. Cusick PhD, Michael K. Georgieff MD believe that there are three main factors that they think stand out more than the rest which are reduction of toxic stress and inflammation, strong social support and secure attachment, and provision of ideal nutrition. Ideal nutrition is a very important factor for the brain's development in the fetal stage and the early postnatal stage of life. During this time scale the ideal nutrition helps to regulate the brain's development which means that the pregnant women have the responsibility to make sure they are eating a healthy balanced diet and avoiding the foods that might cause harm to the baby. They call the first 1000 days the golden opportunities which have a big influence on the child's outcome in life.



In the previous video they explain that the experience babies encounter effect the physical architecture of the developing brain. Having a good architecture can help the baby to create good and effective emotional and social skills that can be develop as life goes on. They also talked about how important the term serve and return is for baby's brain development and things development for babies. Babies can also encounter good stress that will also help the development of their brains for example of this is when babies meet new people this is something that can be very stressful for them however this is also helping to gain functions of their brain development that they will continue to use later in life. However, if a baby encounters toxic stress like abuse, then there is a very high risk of damaging the brain cells and development and it could lead to them having addictions later in life. Some of the damaged caused by abuse can later be repaired but this is not always guarantied, and the damage might not be fixable meaning that the babies brain development has a delay resulting in the baby being behind in their development. Babies require healthy and strong adults to help build better and brighter brains for the future.that parents and early years practitioner can do to make sure this is successful for example maintaining eye contact throughout games, communicating with the baby, touch and interaction are all factors of the serve and return skill for helping to maintain a healthy brain

First Things First said that the babies brain develops more in the first 1000 days than it does through their lifetime. The early stage of development has a long effect on the baby's future because this will give them a better chance of becoming successful and healthy. Every experience a baby will go through during their first 1000 days will affect their brain development and that is why it is very important to make sure they have as many good and positive experiences from as early as possible to make sure they are giving their babies brain the best chance of developing and growing strong. When the baby is born their brain has all the brain cells that they will have for the rest of their life however the connections between their cells are the important factor in making the brain work. The parents or carers of the baby play an important part in supporting the babies brain development, if they are making sure they are allowing their baby to have positive interactions then this will strengthen their development. They need to be made sure they are maintaining a healthy amount of good quality of care, stimulation, and interaction because this is vital in expanding the baby's brain development. Babies will give serval invitations for interaction with adults who they have formed positive relationships with, they will do this through cooing, smiling in the adult's direction or even crying for their attention all of these are good signs to show that the baby is feeling safe and secure enough for their interaction. This is called serve and return which is a vital part in their brain development and relationship building.

Enabling Experiences

Learning isn't the delivery of content. It's the experience of content-rich ideas, activities, processing time and reflection.

Kim Cofino @msecofino
<http://bit.ly/kimcofinodle>

 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/piaser/14780256633>

Vamos said that parents and professionals work together to create a positive atmosphere around the baby so that they can feel a respectful welcoming in the environment around them, by doing this the baby will be more settled and feel safe enough to be able to explore their environment. The curriculum for Wales believes practitioners have the responsibility to make sure they are following the curriculum because it is the practitioners who are setting the expectations of an emotionally supported environment to help teach babies how to express their emotions and how to regulate them as well. It is them who are constant in the care they are providing which means it is them who need to make sure they are being a positive role model.

Education Wales spoke about the importance of the environment in the curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings, they believe that the environment should be welcoming and full of opportunities for welsh language skills. During the time the children must explore their environment they gain a sense of self-belonging and get to know the world around them. It is important to not only think about the physical space in the environment but to also think about the emotional aspects as well. The environment they are in should allow them to be able to freely express themselves whether that be physically, creatively, imaginatively, or emotionally it should be a fun, free space for them to be able to explore their own hobbies and interests.

Sensory play and the benefits



Vygotsky believed that social and cultural context is important for supporting babies to learn, and by following Vygotsky theory we can create sensory play sessions for babies to help them learn and develop. The fun of sensory play is that practitioners can use natural materials as well as fun products like shaving foam and food. Vygotsky said that play supports babies' cognitive development as well as helping them to learn about their emotions and sensory play can help to support Vygotsky's theory by providing babies with a wide range of different materials to support their learning. We can help to support their cultural development by putting materials and objects from different cultures as well as their own in, this will allow them to explore each object and in time will be able to learn more about different cultures around them which makes sensory play good for being an inclusive activity.

Sensory play is also something that supports Montessori's theory of children learn through doing, by setting up a sensory area that has objects from outside in their then babies are having the opportunity to learn about their environment. Babies learn through touch and sensory play is a fun and creative way to support their learning, through sensory play almost everything can be added.

Sensory play is also a good way in support babies through their weaning stage, by giving them the opportunity be involved in a messy play activity with a range of different foods and textures will support them in trying new foods. Everything babies put their hands on goes into their mouths so by creating a safe and fun food tasting activity for them is allowing them to explore their taste buds, different textures, smells and gets them to try new foods. Here is a short video to explain the

importance of sensory play [\(4\) Why sensory play or “messy play” is great for your child’s development! - YouTube](#)



1 - Mirror Play

Mirror play is also a type of sensory play that is beneficial for babies development, mirror play allows baby to be able to develop a good sense of self-awareness, it also allows babies to expand their language skills, it is also something that can be done with all ages. It can be used as a distraction for babies through tummy time, some babies do not like tummy time but by giving them a mirror they can get lost looking at themselves and their environment through different visual points. Singing or babbling into the mirror is a good way to expand their language development. Twinkl (2023) Here is a short video from Twinkl explaining about the benefits of mirror play [What is Mirror Play With Your Baby | Twinkl Teaches EYFS - YouTube](#)

June 5 is World Environment Day

Living Within Planetary Boundaries @ronmader

#WED2015



planeta.wikispaces.com/wed



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Relationships



The relationships that adults form with babies have a long term effect on the babies brain, if they have positive relationships with responsive to and forth interactions then they are more likely to have a strong brain development. These relationships normally start at home with their parents and close family, but can also be their childcare provider or health care professions who are involved in the baby's life. Here is a link for a video explain what effect relationships has on babies, they explain that babies look to their role models to see how they create relationships with other babies, staff members and parents. [Positive relationships in an early childhood community - YouTube](#) . This video if from KidsMatterAustralia and they talk about how the community is something that often gets over looked as a form of a relationship but this is extremely important for babies to be able to witness and be apart of, creating positive relationships with people in the community will help with the babies brain development, social skills as well as helping them to be able to control their emotions.

The role of the adult



According to the curriculum for wales it is the enabling adults responsibility to make sure they are creating the opportunity for babies to be able to have the freedom of exploring their own environment, be able to take safe risks, have a variety of experiences. Practitioners have the responsibility when working with ALN children to also follow the curriculum for wales guidance because this will help to support them and expand their development. Early years practitioners have the duty to provide exceptional care to every child in their setting, and my having a clear understanding on what exceptional care is will allow them to make sure they are providing it. Tops Day Nursery states that their staff provide respectful care and to ensure this they send their staff on respectful care training. They have explained that there are three stages of respectful care, and they are primary care giving, freedom of movement which is very important for babies learning and development and respect for infants' confidence and competence. When staff understand that their role is to make sure the children are safe at all times, are given a healthy balanced diet and giving them time to eat and share their experience of trying new foods with their peers, keeping them clean for example changing their nappies and when doing this it is very important to make sure staff are having the time to talk to the child as well because this helps them to learn new skills and to feel safe and secure.

Conclusion

With the information and links to further information early years practitioners can now have a better understanding that from conception to two years of age is the most important time for a

baby's brain development and everything that happens through the first 1000 days will determine what future the baby will have and it is early years practitioners responsibility to make sure they are providing as many fun and exciting learning experiences for these babies and supporting their families and creating positive relationships with everyone around them no matter their culture, beliefs, sexual orientation. Equality is the way in which early years practitioners can make sure they are supporting the same start in life for everyone.



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