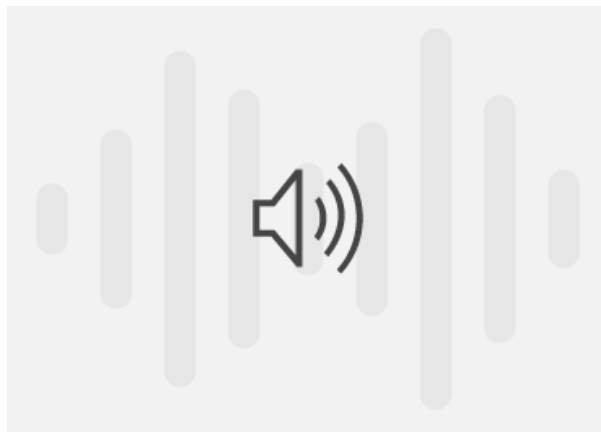




The First 1000 Days



<https://sway.office.com/xhir7A6GiMklFCb#content=8zG4571LSS8mcl>

1 - A powerful message covered by One Voice Children's Choir 2014

What does exceptional care look like in the first 1000 days?



To understand and deliver exceptional care in the first 1000 days of a child's life, there is a need to research and explore in detail the fundamental influences during the early years. Establishing the successful approaches used in practice within the professional setting along with analysing factors such as relationships, communication, interaction, sensory engagement, stimulating environment and holistic growth, which can, as theory shows be elemental during this critical stage of development.

The needs of the child



What are the Theories behind a child's needs within the first 1000 days and more importantly how can these theories be applied in practice by Parents, Carers and Professionals?



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



From the first steps of breathing, sleeping, eating and drinking to accommodate survival, a baby is developing and meeting the basic and most important needs according to Maslow. Following this there is a need for security with preference on the familiar, protective and practiced tasks while forming attachments. Once secured the next level involves love, affection and social interaction which plays a massive part in moving to the penultimate level of self assurance. The fifth level sees personal realisation and success completing Maslow's Pyramid theory. Pichere, P. Cadiat, A. and Probert, C (2015)



2 - SOME EXAMPLES IN PRACTICE

PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Is it possible to develop or even survive in this world without oxygen, food and water?



Air, food and water are the basic physiological needs - These must be met in order to live life and develop.

SAFETY

Babies, Infants and Toddlers can often find themselves in unsafe situations as they become more curious. They are still very much reliant on the care and attention of the adult. Those responsible for the safety of the child can 'baby proof' homes, and places of care provision for example, supporting baby in a safe non threatening environment. The use of safeguarding equipment such as baby gates and cupboard/door locks and assessing the space in relation to risk.



LOVE AND BELONGING

Relationships are built quickly and through trust attachments are soon formed. Mum's smell, her voice, Dad's big strong hands, Nanna's song that has unknowingly travelled back 100 years and more. Big sisters laugh, big brothers cheeky smile, caregivers comforting routine... All factors that can make a child comfortable and secure. Just as easily, a child can become stressed or disturbed by an unknown smell, sound or person causing immediate stress until the cycle to trust begins again.



ESTEEM

An example of this level is the child gaining approval, pleasing parents/carers and professionals through development and inquisition. Feeding, potty training. The child taking physical and emotional credit for doing something they haven't done independently before. The child will feel good as they discover pleasing others.



SELF ACTUALISATION

The child begins to understand what they like and what makes them feel good. They become more fussy with food, clothes and entertainment and discover the pleasure they get from doing things independently and successfully. For example when a child throws their hat on the floor 30 times before the carer gives in and lets their ears just get cold....



According to an informative parenting article published on the Welsh Government Website, aside from meeting a new born babies basic needs such as nutrition, warmth, safety and security, the need to interact through talking, smiling, singing and holding creates a lasting connection that becomes familiar and comfortable, in turn nurturing much needed brain development foundations. [Welsh Government \(no date\) Parenting-Give it a go](#)

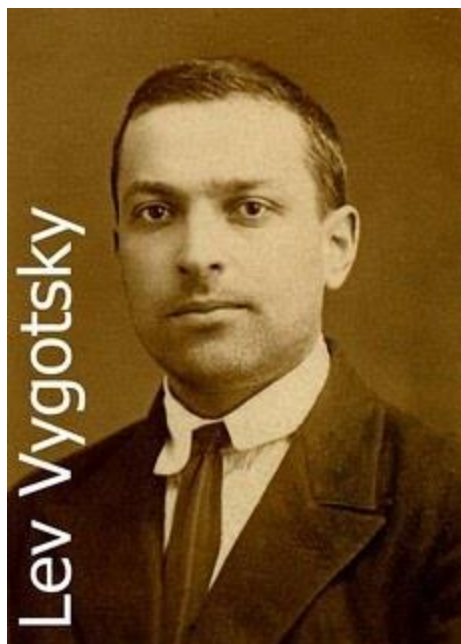
Piaget's theory of cognitive development

Theorist Piaget supports this theory with his research into the development of the child from birth, stating that a babies brains will gather essential sensory memory through seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching.

Piaget, J (2018)

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

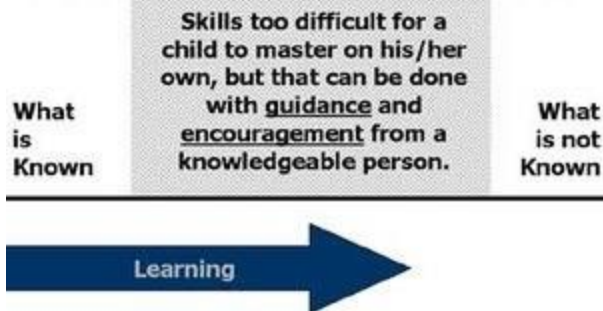
Typical Age Range	Description of Stage	Developmental Phenomena
Birth to nearly 2 years	<i>Sensorimotor</i> Experiencing the world through senses and actions (looking, touching, mouthing)	•Object permanence •Stranger anxiety
About 2 to 6 years	<i>Preoperational</i> Representing things with words and images but lacking logical reasoning	•Pretend play •Egocentrism •Language development
About 7 to 11 years	<i>Concrete operational</i> Thinking logically about concrete events; grasping concrete analogies and performing arithmetical operations	•Conservation •Mathematical transformations
About 12 through adulthood	<i>Formal operational</i> Abstract reasoning	•Abstract logic •Potential for moral reasoning



3 - Lev Vygotsky

Psychologist Vygotsky believed learning through social interaction was by nature the greatest way in which to develop a young mind. This he stated was achieved through sociocultural association with Parents and Care givers etc...

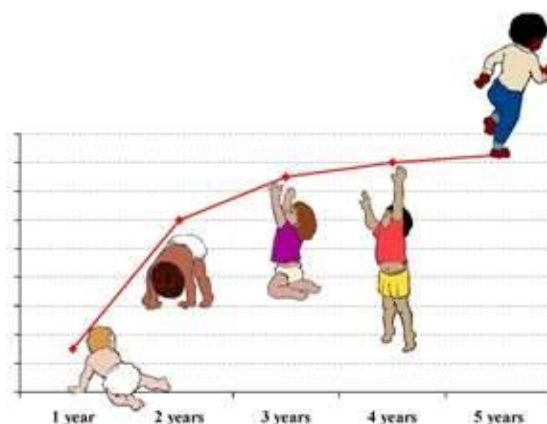
Zone of Proximal Development



[Piaget vs Vygotsky](#) - A great sketch outlining the main differences between Piaget and Vygotsky's theories of cognitive development in a modern way. (2018)

While the two Theorists share some ideas regarding the interactive learning process, they approach them from different perspectives. Piaget being a cognitive constructivist and Vygotsky being a social constructivist.

The importance of the first 1000 days



The first 300 days according to Karakochuk, C. et al. (2018) is an average female pregnancy term and first few weeks of life from birth for the newborn child. The first and most important area in development during this stage is produced by the health and wellbeing of the expecting

Mum/Parent. The nutritional intake delivered through the carrier into the foetus is of great scientific interest and has been shown to promote short- and long-term effects in the outcome of the pregnancy, and the growth and development of the child both inside and outside the womb. The very first day of life following birth is critical states Karakochuk et al. Especially to establish essential breastfeeding success.

There is a vast and varied body of research and statistics regarding the benefits of breast feeding, the proven advantages in health, immunity and nutrition are predominant. Ground-breaking studies have also revealed that breast feeding is said to be linked to higher IQ's and evolving outcomes as well as the proven attachment and bonding theories.

In a Youtube video interview on CBS News This Morning, Dr Holly Phillips discusses the research outcomes from a Brazilian published study in 2015.



To read the full study please use the link provided. [The Lancet - Global Health \(2015\)](#)



According to Unicef - Their Baby Friendly Initiative has given it's staff the skills and tools required to be able to change the way people think surrounding breastfeeding and establishing early relationships. The provision of their best possible care is deemed to profoundly effect the babies healthy development.

The Executive Director of Unicef (1980-1995) powerfully writes a message in an article on the Unicef Website regarding breastfeeding and its positive impacts on the newborn child.

"Breastfeeding is a natural 'safety net' against the worst effects of poverty ... Exclusive breastfeeding goes a long way toward cancelling out the health difference between being born into poverty and being born into affluence ... It is almost as if breastfeeding takes the infant out of poverty for those

first few months in order to give the child a fairer start in life and compensate for the injustice of the world into which it was born."

James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF (1980-1995)



HM Government

4 - The Best Start for Life

A vision for the 1,001 Critical Days

In a review report published on HM Government website titled '**THE BEST START TO LIFE**' The Secretary of State Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP describes himself as **"passionate"** in the developmental outcomes linked to babies getting the best start in life. Together with the Chairperson Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP who's opening line in the report begins with the statement **"Two is too late"**, they would drive forward a review with the purpose of improving the health and development outcomes for babies in England.

The Review



HM Government

- The Review was commissioned by the Prime Minister in the Summer of 2020.
- The main focus of the review was to perceive the first 1001 days from pregnancy through to the age of two.
- Phase one of the review needed to conceptualise how '**brilliance**' in the early years should appear in practice.
- The overall goal set out was to study and observe the factors in achieving life long emotional and physical health and wellbeing.
- The process would include meetings with Parents, Family and all Multiagency and professional representatives who support and nurture development during the first 1000 days.
- The Review was purposefully diverse and non-discriminatory working closely with Families, professionals and volunteers and was heavily influenced by the input of the public voice, questionnaires and factsheets.



5 - Challenges and Outcomes

CHALLENGES AND OUTCOMES

CHALLENGE!

- The Review was put into effect during the peak of the Covid19 Pandemic which affected the planned procedures to carry out research and information gathering.

OUTCOME...

- **While Covid19 will undoubtedly have a massive impact on public health matters worldwide, the report clearly states that in every situation, professionals must assess the critical need to put the youngest citizens at the centre when rebuilding the Health Services.**

CHALLENGE!

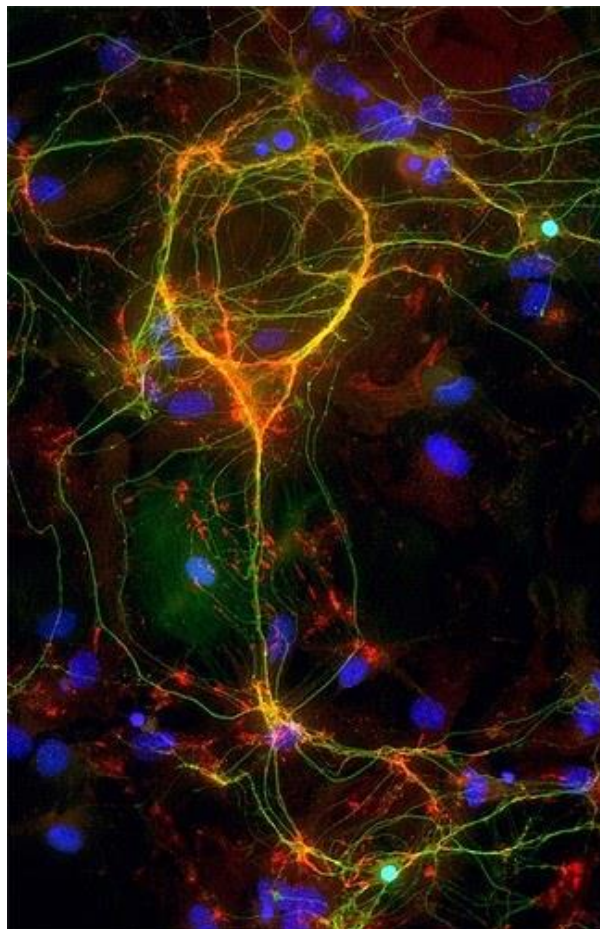
- The Review identified areas where the support and services being offered were exemplary however, it also identified and addressed that in some areas due to workload and staffing especially, professionals were unable to carry out their care to the highest standard, not meeting the needs of the families and leaving them feeling vulnerable and unsupported.

OUTCOMES....

- **The Report found that not all professionals and volunteers observed during the Review possessed the knowledge of working through Multidisciplinary teams. The Review underpins a necessary approach and commitment to working collaboratively to allow shared responsibility, support families and give each individual child the means to have the best start in life.**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/973112/The_best_start_for_life_a_vision_for_the_1_001_critical_days.pdf

The Science behind brain development in children



The basic engineering of the human brain is produced in a journey from the womb into adulthood.

Impactive experiences shape and establish the quality of connections formed, these set the foundations for learning, behaviour and health both mental and physical in the years to come.

During the first few years of a child's life the new neural connections form in their millions by the second and as the child grows into adulthood the connections become more efficient using a process called pruning.

The order in which the sensory pathways develop begins with basic vision and hearing followed by primary language skills then leading to more developed cognitive functions.



Developing Attachments





6 - Video representing the Four Stages of Attachment by Schaffer and Emerson (2017)

[Bowlby's Theory of Attachment](#)

Bowlby's Theory of Attachment has been a significant leader within it's study field however, since the 1970's his theory was targeted and scrutinised receiving a high level of criticism, especially from the social movement of feminism, challenging his theories in an ever evolving culturally diverse system.

Forming attachment is central to Social Development in a child. A healthy attachment is described as a bond/connection between two individuals in which they develop the feelings of security and commitment, meeting required needs.

Secure attachment within the first 1000 days is a critical stepping-stone for the development in the physical and emotional health of a child. Lindon, J (2012)

Attachment behaviour is seen as a pattern of continuous action met with reaction. An example of this is when a baby cries the care giver presents themselves to sooth and meet the required needs of the crying child.





The Role of the professional working with children and attachments.



Aubrey and Riley (2019) Suggest the requirements for professional care givers can be challenging dealing with proponents of attachment. Children will find it difficult to understand and find the process stressful being separated from the primary caregiver. On the other side of this

situation there may be children who have developed insecure attachments during their early life and this may result in the child's inability to establish trusting bonds/relationships.

While children's attachments should only be assessed by qualified adeptly trained professionals, all adults with a responsibility of care for a child within a professional setting need to understand the theories of attachment and know or have access to information to help parents, care givers and children express their needs. NSPCC Learning (2021)

[Attachment and Child Development](#)

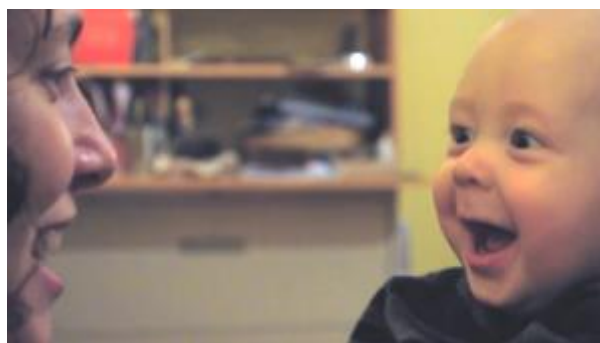
Care givers in the professional setting can work directly with families and reveal trusting pathways between multiagency services, this can improve the transition process and wellbeing of both the child and family enabling more positive outcomes.



7 - Image taken from Nursery World (2016) [website]

The importance of Social Interaction from birth.

Serve and Return



8 - The serve and return method is an amazing way to engage with the baby and begin developing the pathways of communication

[Developing Child](#)

When a child's gesture, sound or facial expression is met by an adults encouraging and appropriate response, neural connections are formed and strengthened to support communication and develop social skills.

If a parent, carer and supporting family respond sensitively to the child's expressed needs they enable an environment rich experience.

Sadly, the absence of these essential interactive experiences during the early stages of development can have a hugely negative impact on the child's wellbeing and development. This can cause mental, physical and emotional impairment over time. **Centre on the Developing Child-Havard University (2022)**

According to Linden, J (2012) Early social interaction plays a vital role in developing language and communication skills. Linden cites Ward, S (2004) and identifies her as the creator of the 'BABY TALK' programme.

[The Babytalk Programme](#)

Ward, a qualified and experienced Speech and Language Therapist engaged with children of all levels and social/cultural backgrounds, not only with speech and language complications but with children who had come to her without a consistent and supported emotional/physical start in their early lives.

Studies have revealed that in unpredictable social situations, the quality of interactions between mother/primary care giver and baby can alter the outcome of cognitive/language development in pre-school age children. Two-way interaction is necessary in achieving a secure foundation for early development. Children from institutional settings, neglectful, challenging home environments along with internationally adopted children can lead to a higher risk of language development complications.

Professional interaction and communication- How can we make a difference.



An Early Childhood educational Journal written in 2018 by Ebbeck M., Warrier S. and Goh, M. highlights information from UNICEF (2008) and Taylor (2004). This information discusses the huge rise in children 0-3 years, cared for and raised in 'out of home' settings. In many cases identifying children who are placed in care services for up to 12 hours a day in order to support family care needs.

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/1992786009/fulltextPDF/A66357EE6A03491APQ/1?accountid=130472>

Taken from information on the EYFS Government Website, regarding resources for childminders, nursery leaders and pre-school practitioners supporting interaction from birth to 4 years. There is key advice set to encourage successful interactive communication, filling the void and enabling Professional Care facilitators to support and meet the growing needs of the child:

- High Quality Interactions with all children.
- Support the child's individual development by planning effective opportunities for a language rich environment and maximum communication.
- Be gifted in listening skills, showing patience, asking open questions, repeating gestures, using serve and return.
- Inclusively valuing all verbal/non verbal communication by adapting different strategies for the individual child to build trusting relationships. Using words, pictures, body language, facial expressions, gestures, actions, props and songs.
- Taking time and allowing child led progression.
- Being a responsive partner and engaging in the child's meaningful play ideas.
- Concentrating on providing authentic interaction.
- Observe and record what fascinates and interests the child.

- Remembering that the best interactions and communications are dependant on the adult and the social relationships.
- Knowing that children are instinctively ready to begin communication from birth and will look for opportunities to interact.
- Reflecting on the quality of provisions within the time allocated to increase opportunities.



The importance of Respectful, meaningful and exceptional care.



Respectful Care - The Montessori way.



*9 - Italy's first female Medical Doctor Maria Montessori has revolutionised the care and Educational system since the beginning of the 1900's. Her methods of developing education are used worldwide spanning all abilities and ages from birth to adulthood and are becoming more and more poignant in the curriculum. **Montessori Education (UK)***

In an article on the Montessori Notebook website <https://www.themontessorinotebook.com/>

There are 10 suggested ways to aid practitioners in delivering respectful care in relation to the children they are responsible for. Some of these suggestions being:

- 1. Having a soft, respectful and gentle approach. (See also the Pickler method) [About — Pikler UK Association](#) and Gerber's RIE Approach [Magda Gerber's RIE Philosophy - Basic Principles - Magda Gerber, Seeing Babies with New Eyes](#) for similar learning experience across the globe.*
- 2. Use of kind language even when underpinning discipline.*
- 3. Give thorough feedback, explaining to the child the actions they carried out that have pleased you instead of just saying "Well Done".*
- 4. Enable the child to realise their own capabilities by setting them up for success with the correct tools and surroundings.*

Meaningful care in practice

Meaningful care can be developed using a holistic approach surrounding the individual child, observation and pedagogy can support and promote how the adult plans and facilitates the session set out. Depending on the child and their needs the adult could become a participant to aid communication or maybe become an observer during a more intimate or isolated play session. One of the ways to promote and deliver meaningful care within a child care setting is to engage in meaningful play.

Meaningful play is when children care about the situation or task they are engaged in, learning through experiencing.

While it is hard to define play and its meaning as it is personal to the individual child and alters with factors such as age and personality, enabling the play by introducing sensory engagement and providing a rich and stimulating environment in which to allow them the opportunity to expand their imagination, can enhance the child's development and become an effective source of independent learning. Brodie, K (2018)





What does Exceptional Care look like?



Throughout this scrap book exceptional care has been used to identify what is needed and expected of care givers from Parents to Professionals. There is a huge accumulation of scaffolded strategies, a vast amount of theories and resources to be researched and ongoing framework adaptations as the education and care systems nationwide adapts to the ever changing world we live in.

Examples of improving excellence can be found in area's of development such as 'Continuity' and 'Inclusivity' and learning to critically evaluate practices using reflection and observation.

CONTINUITY EXAMPLE

Too many changes within the workplace with care givers being replaced by new staff can lead to babies and children reluctant to form new and trusting relationships.

- To achieve excellence in this area, staff need to feel valued and supported with their needs as facilitators met, and measures for absence due to sickness or isolation within these difficult times need to be managed with extra care.

INCLUSIVITY EXAMPLE

If no-one in the work setting speaks the language of the child or is able to validate the values and beliefs of the family it may cause some self developmental damage. If the child feels they are miscommunicating or considers themselves difficult to understand they can become insecure of who they are and where they come from.

- Employing culturally representative staff can enable more fluid communication and assist in educating other professionals and children to induce a more fluid level of understanding.



10 - Critical Evaluation

Look at your own philosophy, your roots that led to that certain way of thinking and caring. Check your background for inconsistency.

Ask yourself why you work in this industry, honestly evaluate your commitment.

Be open to as many perspectives of parenting as humanly possible and be willing to accept that things may not always align with what you know or what you have learnt in University.

Value ALL perspectives.

Hold a genuine inclusive respect for others.

Reflect and be ready to change the way your service practices if you identify the need.

Exeptional Care

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ECEY4005/C



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