The First 1000 Days

Lydia Davey 1909154 The First 1000 Days ECEY4005/C

What are the first 1000 Days?

"The First 1,000 Days are by far the most influential on a child's future capabilities, emotionally and socially." (NCT 2021).

This scrapbook will include information on the challenges of caring for an infant, why it is important to be consistent in care and to provide/promote stimulating learning opportunities and environments. There will also be discussion on the importance of holistic development and pedagogy.

The HM Government (2021) state that the first 1000 days of a child's life, from conception to the child's second birthday, provide the foundations for their cognitive, emotional, and physical development. The first 1000 days are crucial for a baby's development, yet they are also the most vulnerable. Some babies have been diagnosed with a disability, while others have a developmental need that, if not addressed, will grow into an additional learning need once they reach compulsory school age. It may take longer to recognise other children's needs.

Healthy Pregnancy

A healthy pregnancy ensures a healthy life for the unborn child. The foetus is sensitive to the surroundings around the mother as it develops inside the womb; it hears what the mother hears, eats what the mother eats, and may respond when the mother is unhappy. In addition to being significant in and of itself, the mother's mental and physical health is critical for the baby's positive growth (HM Government, 2021).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2021) suggest that in preparation for parenthood, the balance of work and home life, as well as physiological and psychological demands, shift during pregnancy. Optimal health in a woman's changing body requires a healthy environment and a healthy lifestyle during the 40 weeks of pregnancy. WHO (2021), also advise that being physically active, avoiding unhealthy behaviour and maintaining a balanced diet can promote a healthier pregnancy. Being active will benefit pregnant women in feeling as though they have more energy and feel less tired, as well as becoming stronger and getting more sleep (NHS Inform, 2021).

The responses to stress of a foetus or baby exposed to toxic stress can be affected later in life. This early stress might be caused by the mother's mental health, such as suffering from signs of depression and anxiety, and grief (Wavetrust, 2014).

Development

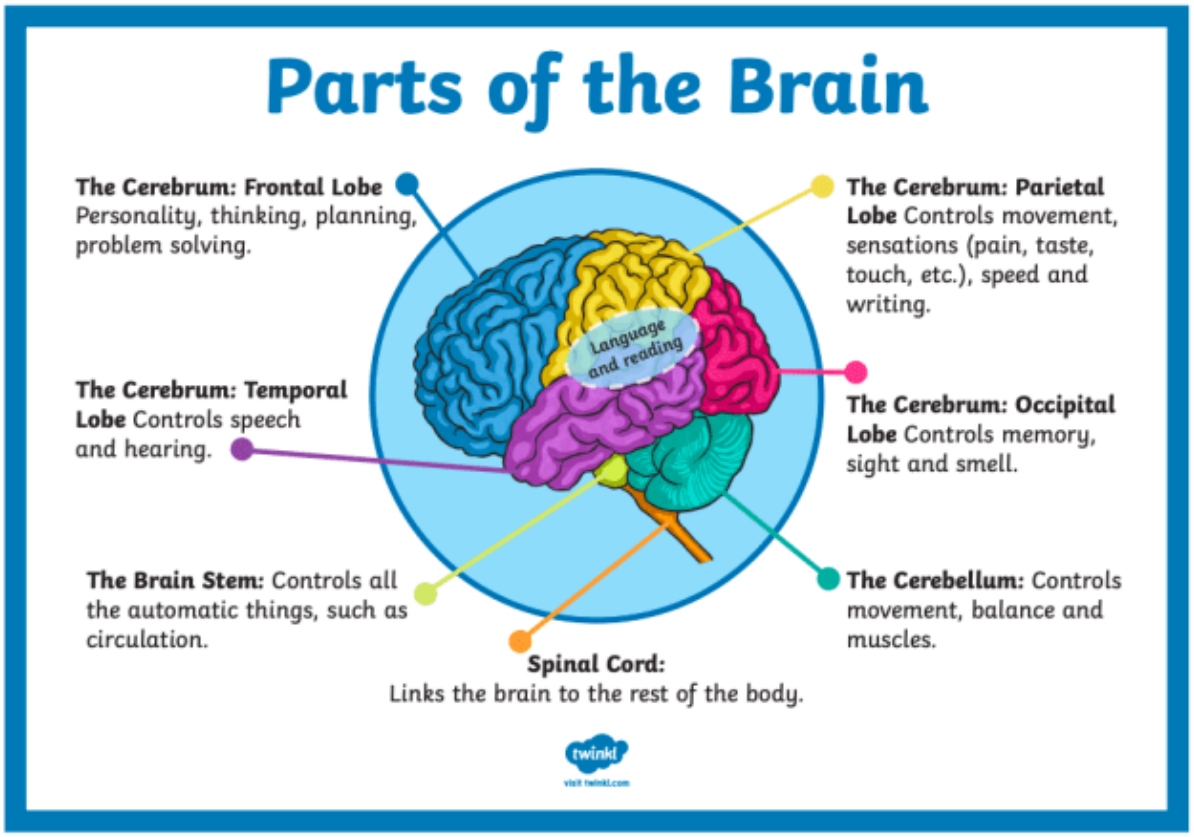
(Source: Topeka and Shawnee Community Public Library, 2020).

It is important to consider that all children are unique and will learn and develop at different paces and in different ways. Holistic is a method of dealing with something as a whole, even by dividing areas separately. In child development, holistic development is where development (physical, personal, social, and emotional), language, growth, and learning are integrated as one whole (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021). Brodie (2018), supports this and states that young children's learning, growth, and development are all interrelated and connected from the moment they are born.

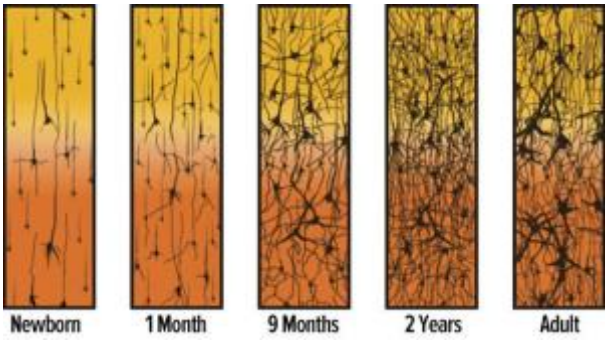
Learning and phases of a child's growth are based on play. Children develop language skills, emotions and creativity, as well as social and intellectual skills, through play. Most children's play is natural and spontaneous, while some children may require adult support (Early Years Matters, 2022). Early Years Matters (2022) also state that children explore and discover their immediate environment through play, which takes place both inside and outside. During this time, children explore new ideas and skills, take chances, demonstrate creativity, and work alone or with others to problem solve.

Tummy time (placing newborns on their tummies on the carpet) is important for neck and core strength. As children develop physically from the core of their bodies onwards, tummy time helps them develop core stability, which is necessary before they can have secure arm and leg motions (Brodie, 2018). Archer and Siraj (2015) discuss how babies who push up from the floor with their arms develop the power and alignment in their spines that are required for upright posture. From the age of ten weeks to seven months, babies should be on their stomach (unless sleeping or being held). The National Health Service (NHS) (2021) suggest being involved in playing with a baby or young child, as they will learn more from a parent figure or a practitioner, that they have a secure attachment with, more than they will from a toy.

Neuroscience

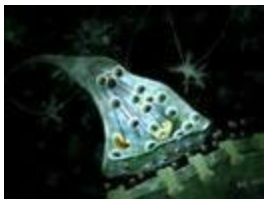


Conkbayir (2017) states that a child's brain begins developing in the womb, and in the cerebral cortex each neuron has approximately 2500 synapses from birth. It is not necessary for early years practitioners to have a thorough understanding of brain physiology or the development and functioning of the neurological system. The complexity of neuroscience and neuropsychology provides us with the confidence to believe what we see in babies, and that the complex and rapid development that occurs in the first year of life is kindled by nature and supported and extended by the environments and relationships in which children are nurtured (Nutbrown, 2011).



1 - (Source: Otra Education, 2012).

Synaptogenesis occurs at a far higher rate in young children than it does in adults, causing the first years of a child's life critical for learning and development. The overall synapse number gradually increases after the first year of postnatal life. Conkbayir (2017) also states that with each new experience, synapses become more efficient. With new information flowing in from the senses, old and unnecessary connections die away to make place for new growth, transforming the brain's landscape.

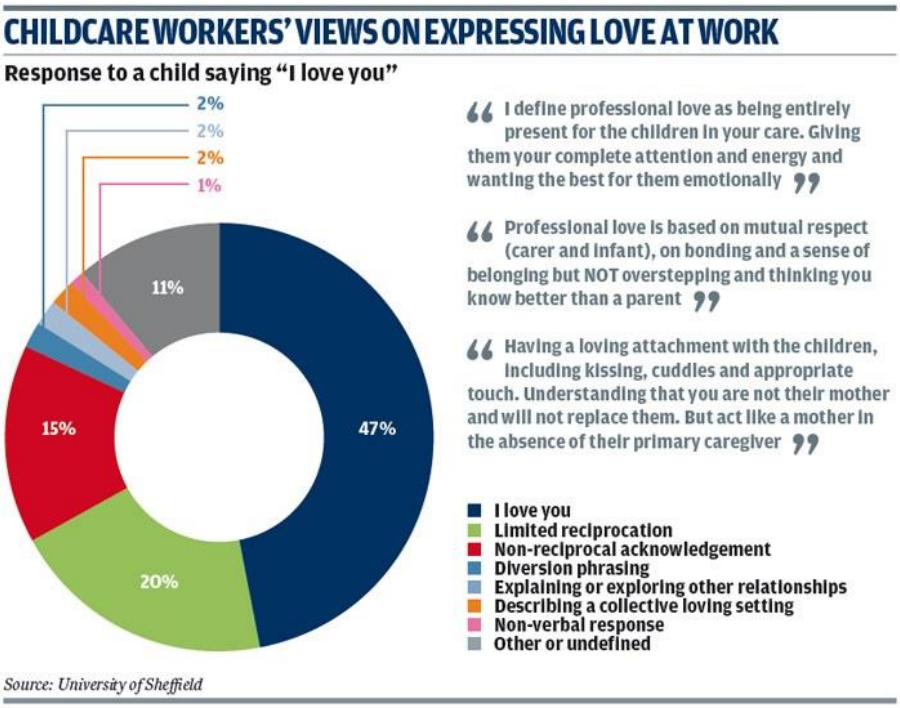


2 - This video demonstrates the journey of a neurotransmitter synapse.

How can we support the development of building these connections?

Gerdhardt (2015) suggests that love and affection contribute to brain development in babies and young children, and states that early stress has a negative impact on the brain's emotion and immunity systems, which make them less effective. This can put the child at risk for a variety of problems in later stages of development, including depression, anti-social behaviour, addictions, as well as physical illnesses.

Dr Jools Page introduced the term "professional love" to describe the type of reciprocal relationship that some professional caregivers may have with newborns and young children (Heale, 2022). Dr Page conducted a survey on expressing love in a workplace and according to the study, most practitioners were comfortable with physical contact to promote a secure attachment and security for the child. 95% of practitioners believe that displaying affection to the children in their care is a vital component of early childhood practise, although ten percent are concerned about false allegations and how others perceive their acts. One-fifth of those surveyed stated they avoided being alone with the children they were responsible for (Goddard, 2016).



3 - (Source: Children & Young People Now, 2016).

John Bowlby

(Source: IRISS, 2022).

Theorist John Bowlby is known as the pioneer of attachment theory, and suggested that children have an innate desire to create attachment bonds with those who care for them (The John Bowlby Centre, n.d).

MP Andrea Leadsom (2021) suggests newborns that have a secure attachment are considerably more likely to grow up to be individuals who can adapt with life's ups and downs, form solid work and home connections, and are better prepared to parent their own children.

Bowlby's attachment studies focused on the effects of a child's separation from his or her "mother or permanent substitute mother." Bowlby chose to investigate the impact of a child being removed from their home and placed in a nursery for three reasons:

1. He felt it might have a negative impact on a child's personality development,
2. There was no way to know if the attachment had happened or not,
3. It occurred to be a field where proactive steps may be taken, where children could be limited (Johnson, 2018).

Bowlby identified four different types of attachment: Secure, ambivalent, avoidant, and disorganised. Only the secure attachment is classed as a positive attachment, and the others to be negative (Ham, 2017).

4 - (Source: Jacob Ham, 2017).

Johnson, 2018 also discusses that in terms of attachment, the early bonds between a baby and the initial caregiver, who may or may not be the mother, are extremely important. This stable basis is created by the parent or carer's capacity to offer fundamental necessities such as food and warmth, as well as empathy, acknowledgement, and appropriate, sensitive responses to the baby's ever-changing demands. This also relates to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs - which will be looked at later through the scrapbook. Consideration is taken as to whether the mother or caregiver is capable of developing the concept of 'mirroring'.

Mirroring is the accurate reflection of a child's expressed thoughts and feelings by a parent. The child will feel accepted and validated as a result of this introspection (Lawrence Journal World, 2011).

Attachment type	Caregiver Behaviours	Child Behaviours
Secure	• React quickly and positively to child's needs • Responsive to child's needs	• Distressed when caregiver leaves • Happy when caregiver returns • Seek comfort from caregiver when scared or sad
Insecure – avoidant	• Unresponsive, uncaring • Dismissive	• No distress when caregiver leaves • Does not acknowledge return of caregiver • Does not seek or make contact with caregiver
Insecure – ambivalent	• Responds to child inconsistently	• Distress when caregiver leaves • Not comforted by return of caregiver
Insecure - disorganized	• Abusive or neglectful • Responds in frightening, or frightened ways	• No attaching behaviours • Often appear dazed, confused or apprehensive in presence of caregiver

5 - (Source: System Speak, 2019).

https://video-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/watch/the-wonder-year-first-year-development-shaping-the-brain

This video gives an insight on how the close relationships baby Orson has help his development and learning. Throughout the video there are reciprocal movements and body language between both Orson and mum. Orson sends out signals of needs or wants through facial and vocal expressions and waits for a response from his caregiver, when the caregiver responds to the signal, it serves as a return signal for Orson to read.

Orson's parents and family provide Orson with loving touch, which is positive for his first year of development. There are also many repeated actions shown in the video, such as Orson (aged around 6 months) playing with a treasure basket, which is filled with everyday household items (such as a wooden spoon, hairbrush, ribbon, and pinecones) that have different textures, weights, colour, shapes, and smells.

A treasure basket aims to offer a wide sensory experience. Hughes (2015) discusses how a treasure basket may be a 'non-social' activity. This is due to the baby finding joy and satisfaction from simply studying the objects. The pleasure is not acquired from an interaction with another person, such as when playing a 'peek-a-boo' game, being tickled, or fed. The objects themselves, not how others use them, are the source of fascination. When an adult handles the objects with a child, the game becomes a social activity.

6 - (Source: Tales of an Aussie Mum, 2011)

Enabling Environments

(Source: Sturt Street Children's Centre, 2021).

What exactly is an enabling environment, and how can you help to create one for the children in your care?

An enabling environment provides a rich, varied, and safe environment for children to play, explore, and learn. This can have a significant impact on a child's early development and learning (Nursery Resources, 2018).

The setting should be adjusted for children, practitioners should recognise and promote independence, as well as understand how children learn best. Enabling environments are made up of three key elements:

- The Emotional Environment is a setting's atmosphere and how it feels. The Indoor Environment consists of the resources available in the indoor space, how they are accessed, and how activities are conducted.
- The Indoor Environment consists of the resources available in the indoor space, how they are obtained, and how activities are conducted.
- The Outdoor Environment refers to the resources available in the outdoor environment, as well as how they are accessed and how activities conducted (Nursery Resources, 2018). The outdoor environment provides opportunities, that children can use their senses to appreciate the natural materials such as different noises and smells.

The images show simulating environments outdoors, which supports an infants holistic development.

7 - (Source: TG Escapes, 2018).

Jean Piaget

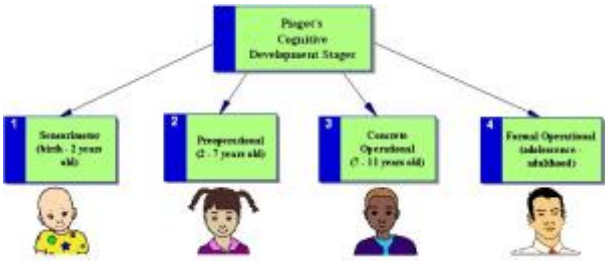
Halpenny and Pettersen (2013) mention that the first stage of Piaget's cognitive development focuses on tracking the transition from child awareness, which is nearly entirely reflexive, spontaneous, and reliant on sensory motor tasks, to a thoughtful, intentional child capable of influencing the world around them.

Piaget further separated the sensorimotor stage into six substages, each of which he observed as a new skill was established:

1. Reflexes (0–1 month): Reflexes such as sucking and crying help babies understand their surroundings.
2. Primary Circular Reactions (1–4 months): New schemas and sensations are merged, allowing children to intentionally engage in pleasurable acts like sucking their thumb.
3. Secondary Circular Reactions (4–8 months): Children are now aware that their activities have an impact on their environment, and they actively carry out actions to attain desired outcomes.
4. Coordination of Reactions (8–12 months): Children investigate their surroundings and frequently copy others' activities.

5. Secondary Circular Reactions (12–18 months): Children begin to explore with novel behaviours.

6. Early Representational Thought (18 – 14 months): Symbols that represent items or events begin to be recognised and appreciated by children (Piaget, 2013).



8 - (Source: Emerging Perspectives on learning, teaching and technology, 2014)

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Stage	Age range	What happens at this stage?
Sensorimotor	0-2 years old	Coordination of senses with motor responses, sensory curiosity about the world. Language used for demands and cataloguing. Object permanence is developed.
Preoperational	2-7 years old	Symbolic thinking, use of proper syntax and grammar to express concepts. Imagination and intuition are strong, but complex abstract thoughts are still difficult. Conservation is developed.
Concrete Operational	7-11 years old	Concepts attached to concrete situations. Time, space, and quantity are understood and can be applied, but not as independent concepts.
Formal Operational	11 years old and older	Theoretical, hypothetical, and counterfactual thinking. Abstract logic and reasoning. Strategy and planning become possible. Concepts learned in one context can be applied to another.

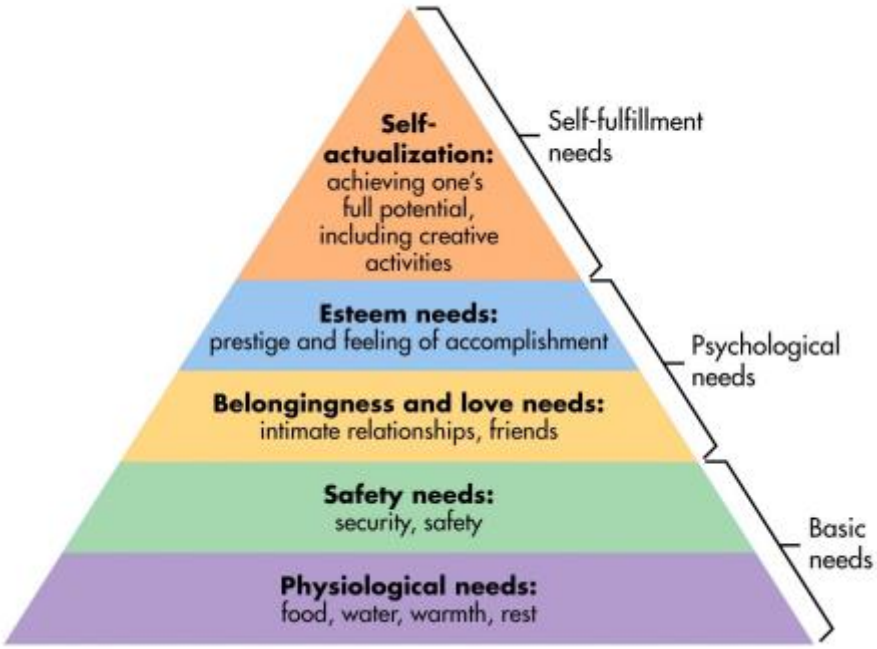
The Psychology Notes Headquarters - https://www.PsychologyNotesHQ.com

9 - (Source: Psychology Notes HQ, 2021).

Enabling Adult

In this section, we look at the importance of respectful care and the opportunities to engage in meaningful learning opportunities with young children. This could be interaction during changing, eating, sleeping, observing likes and dislikes, as well as responding to a child's wants and needs. An enabling adult could be a parent, family member, practitioner, educator, or care giver. Furthermore, enabling adults are responsive, create an environment that is communication rich, as well as modelling a joyful approach to learning.

The Welsh Government (2021) state that the adults role is critical to all learners progression, however even more so during a period of learning. It is the facilitating adult that sets the standards for learning by creating an emotionally safe setting in which children can express and manage their emotions and behaviours in healthy ways. The Welsh Government (2021) also explain that adults should provide care consistently and act as role models for compassion and kindness. An enabling adult help children to deal with change and uncertainty which prepares them to manage transitions and daily changes in their lives.



10 - (Source: World Building, 2016).

Rose, Gilbert, and Richards (2015) propose that it is critical to understand the nutrients, as well as their purpose and function in the body. Essential nutrients that are lacking or deficient throughout childhood might stifle growth and lead to deficiency illnesses. Our food intake should provide all the nutrients we require in a well-balanced diet.

Rose, Gilbert, and Richards (2015) also state that food is a basic physiological component that must be satisfied before an individual can progress, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954). According to Maslow's theory, each level's demands must be met before advancing to the next.

1. Physiological needs - Air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, and warmth are all natural basic requirements for human survival. If these requirements are not met, the human body will not be able to function effectively.

2. Safety needs - security and safety needs become more important once the physiological needs have been met. Individuals seek predictability and control, which can be fulfilled by family and community/society (Simply Psychology, 2020).

3. Love and belongingness needs - Individuals will have a sense of belonging when their need to develop trust with others becomes more focused. Approval-seeking behaviours may become more common in a young child. The child may participate in activities such as exploring or asking a lot of questions in order to obtain their parents' attention. In certain ways, the child need an emotional or social bond with their parents or caregiver (Association of Surgical Technologists, 2009),

4. Esteem needs - Self-esteem is strongly linked to an individual's ego, implying a strong desire to be valued by others. The individual's focus continues to gain acceptance from others. This level of self-esteem is attained when a person has achieved a certain amount of status, recognition, reputation, and appreciation. Maintaining these aspects takes effort. They may also require some type of reinforcement or validation in order to sustain this level of self-esteem (Association of Surgical Technologists, 2009),

5. Self actualization - The inner dialogue that everyone develops at some point in their lives is known as self-actualization. To do so, some sort of prior necessity must be established or met. After a person's basic necessities have been satisfied, they can focus on a meaningful calling (Association of Surgical Technologists, 2009). This need is self-contained, all other deficit needs must be met in some way, which is best defined as who we appear to be in society's eyes.

11 - (Source: Talk - Works Psychotherapy, 2021).

Respectful care

Childcare State Capacity Building Centre (2018), suggest that respectful caring could include talking to newborns, explaining what is currently happening and why, and adjusting voice tone to the child's level. Responsive interactions include reading children's cues and reacting in ways that make the child feel heard and appreciated. For each child, respectful caregiving may take on a different style. Capacity to have polite and responsive interactions with newborns and infants is aided by the time spent creating relationships with families. As you work with families, an understanding of how the child communicates at home, the child's preferred means of communication, and the family's care routines will be learned, all of which will aid interactions with the child in care.

Consider nappy changing as an example. When beginning nappy changing with an infant, choose a time when they are not particularly concentrated on exploration, approach at their level, wait for them to acknowledge the caregiver, and then indicate it is time for a nappy change. Throughout the nappy-changing procedure, respect is demonstrated by waiting for the child's response and continuing to participate in a back-and-forth dialogue in response to their cues. Respect is still exhibited by informing the child of what you're about to do before doing it and encouraging participation whenever possible. These are chances to have one-on-one exchanges during nappy changing each day, where the childs participation and learning can be encouraged and supported (Childcare State Capacity Building Centre, 2018).

12 - (Source: Baby Centre, 2022).

Enabling Experiences

(Source: Imperial College London, 2021).

The Welsh Government (2021) imply that enabling experiences should encourage children's independence, by providing challenges as well as opportunities for achievement throughout the education process. Experiential learning should be formed in real-life, authentic situations and create opportunity for deep engagement and continuous active learning.

Play is the foundation for learning and the stages of a child's development. Through play, children acquire linguistic skills, emotions, and creativity, as well as social and cognitive skills. While the majority of children's play is natural and impromptu, some children of this age may require adult assistance. (Early Years Matters, 2022). Early Years Matters (2022) also state that children explore and discover their immediate environment through play, which takes place both inside and outside. During this time, children explore new ideas and skills, take chances, demonstrate creativity, and work alone or with others to problem solve.

Messy play is a result of children's practical interactions, thinking, and need for participation (Gascoyne, 2018). During messy and risky play, children explore using all of their senses, particularly their sense of touch; providing many opportunities to form and create materials; and not working to make or produce something (Duffy, 2007). It appeals to children's natural curiosity about the world around them, as well as their strong desire to learn more.

13 - (Source: NDSU, 2020).

14 - (Source: Zero to Three, 2016).

15 - (Source: Kwa-McCan, 2011).

16 - (Source: Splat Messy Play, 2018).

Pedagogy

(Source: Montessori Action, 2019).

The practise of education is referred to as pedagogy. It is focused with the "how" of adult-child cooperation, while also recognising that how children learn and develop at this age is determined not only by what is designed to be taught, but also by how it is facilitated (Department for Education, 2015).

Throughout statutory education, it is critical that a child feels welcomed and included in the classroom. Maslow (1987) proposed that belonging was a necessary and sufficient human need that had to be addressed before a person could feel self-worth. As a result, the classroom practitioner's responsibility should be to guarantee that students build a sense of belonging, for example, by ensuring that children's voices are heard, listening, and responding favourably to them, and being seen to act on their comments and suggestions (Aubrey and Riley, 2017).

Te Whariki is the early years curriculum for New Zealand and involves significant relationships between the curriculum and families, and the broader community;

- It is a way of thinking about education and learning that emphasises responsive and reciprocal relationships with people and places;
- A multi-disciplinary and multi-model approach to curriculum content;
- A desire for children to develop to be confident and able learners, be healthy in mind and body and secure in their contribution to society (Lee. et al, 2013).

Referencing List