



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

why are the first 1000 days important?

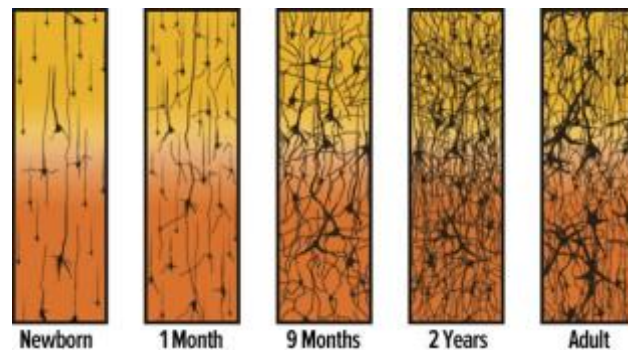
The first years of a person's life is a critical opportunity for building a healthy, resilient and competent individual. (Burton 2015, p1 cited in Brodie 2018). Brodie (2018) states that children's development from birth to three consists of learning, growing and progressing to the next stage, this is known as a vital time for the child and sets the foundations for their future development.

Vamos (2019) states that every moment of an infant's life has an importance, additionally, Lancaster (2006) states that for every child to matter practitioners need to expand on their listening cultures by recognising children's different variety of languages, they need to provide choice, communicate, have the ability to reflectively think and make time for the infant.

EFCNI (2018) talks about the first 1000 days of life and explain that they are important as it is a substantial opportunity to support the child's development alongside their physical health and

wellbeing, this specific time of life can have a large impact on the infants future life as they grow up. They state that the infant's environment plays a big part in the child's growth and brain development.

Interactions from the start



Alexandra street (2008) talks about the interactions and growth of the child and explains that the new borns brain shapes in the first 3 years of their lives, their head grows rapidly and the cortex is smooth. They discuss how brains are made up of neurons and that babies have lack of connections but the senses that the babies have allow them to form connections and the ones they don't use get pruned away. Additionally, Save the children (2016) explains that during infancy, the connections grow stronger and new connections form, this builds a network to underline children's development.

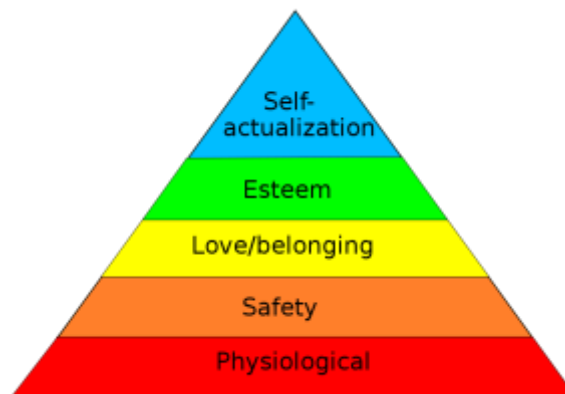
Inclusion and respectful care

Nutbrown (2008) States that inclusion matters as every child has a right to feel a sense of belonging and to be cared for in the community. Gerhardt (2015) mentions that inclusion is all about partnerships between parents, families, practitioners and other agencies that value each other.

Welsh government (2021) talks about enabling adults and state that they need to be responsive, facilitators, consistent in their care, compassionate and kind, they believe that enabling adults should create a joyful approach to learning by using the child's curiosity as an opportunity to teach them, this supports the learner by allowing them to develop confidence and independence. Additionally, Gerhardt (2015) believes that affection towards the baby is involved in the shaping of their brain.

MSG (2022) Discusses Maslow's theory and talks about the different needs of the child, they talk about the physiological needs and safety needs of the child which are at the bottom levels of the pyramid and consists of food, shelter, health and water or milk, it is important to ensure that babies always have these basic needs met when in any setting especially when the baby is too young to verbally communicate or move to tell you what they need or want. In relation to this, the center of the developing child (2021) talks about serve and return and discusses how babies respond to closeness and contact, these forms of contact could be eye contact, touch, music and gestures, it is important for practitioners to serve and return to babies so they are able to form a bond with the infant. Furthermore, Alexandra Street (2008) discusses the importance of meeting the child's needs by noticing their queues

such as crying and rubbing their eyes, this allows the practitioner to notice that they need support and is then able to respond to them.



Vamos (2019) talks about showing an infant affection and believes that a child's needs will always be met as long as the care giver provides them with a stable, warm and reliable relationship, he believes that adults hands were able to pick up the babies' smallest vibrations of movement. In relation to this, The Pikler collection (2022) discuss Piklers foundation which was introduced after infants became orphans in World War 2 and were moved into Piklers nursery in Italy. They discuss how the Pikler foundation was based on the respectful relationship between an infant and adult and how Pikler investigated the growth of children's motor development and believed in the significant strength in the power of hands and how simple things such as hands can be communicated through movements and gestures. Pikler believed that hands constitute the emotion of the infant, whether the expression is kind and nurturing or rough and negative.



The university of Sheffield (2015) talk about professional love and explains it is about adults being sensitive towards young children in their care and having the ability to notice what is needed to show the child love at every moment. In addition to this, the Welsh Government (2021) discuss the curriculum of non-maintained settings and talk about the five child led developmental pathways which consist of wellbeing, belonging, communication, physical development and exploration of the child, these are in place so that the child can progress at their preferred pace and and in a comfortable own learning environment. Stacey (2009) talks about emergent curriculum and states that this form of curriculum is child initiated, in the moment, responsive to the child and flexible rather than being set up, well planned

and made in advance. She also states that observation plays a large part in emergent curriculum as it allows the practitioner to see what the child is thinking whilst also playing and learning through what interests them and leaving when they are disinterested.

Holistic Approach



1 - key education foundation (2020)

Key education foundation (2020) explains that 90% of a child's brain development happens before the age of five and believes that it is important to teach children in a way they prefer and enjoy in order for their development to be enhanced. The video explains that a practitioner should look to ensure children are happy, healthy, expressive, understanding and excited to learn and by doing this you need to have a holistic approach which focusses on the child's development, a few examples of the developmental areas needed to meet the points above consist of cognitive, language, emotional, social, creative and physical development.

Brodie (2018) discusses the qualities of a practitioner giving exceptional care in a setting, she explains that practitioners working with infants need to be there for the child both physically and emotionally and believes that they need to communicate with the child and parent.

Examples of sustained interactions with the infant could potentially consist of talking, eye contact, cuddles and picking up cues that show the child is distressed. (Goouch and powell 2013). In addition to this, Weber (2010) talks about Piklers foundation where the adult naturally spends large amounts of time with the infant providing intimate care such as feeding, bathing and dressing. She talks about the infants need for attention and the importance of giving the infant undivided time which will allow these moments to provide the infant with a feeling of belongingness and comfort in their environment, if the child isn't having the full level of attention, then Pikler believed this would result in a feeling of isolation and confusion.

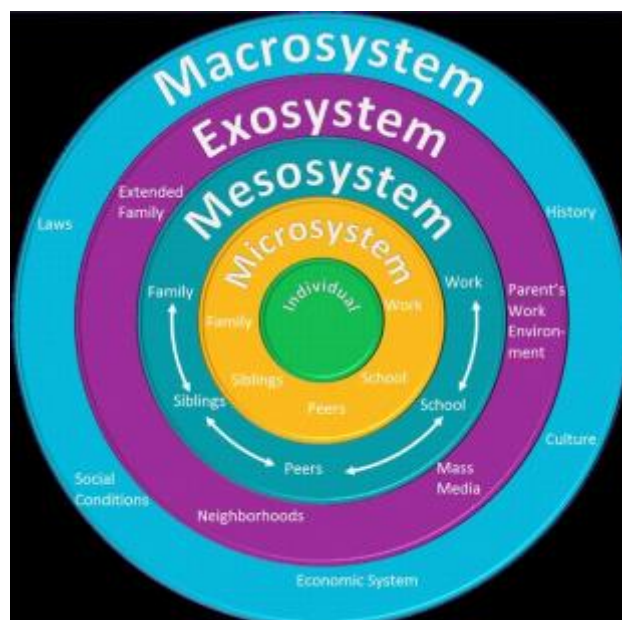
Welsh government (2021) discuss the enabling pathways and believe that by following a curriculum whilst including the four purposes, learners are more encouraged to develop and expand on their skills whilst becoming healthier and more confident with others, this prepares them as they continue to grow and age, they believe that children will build relationships and reach their full potential. Additionally, The National Association for the Education of Young Children (no date, cited in Forbes 2004, p 3) based in Washington advises practitioners that when implementing curriculum for under 2s, it should not be a watered down version of the older child's curriculum. On the contrary to this, Nutbrown (2015) believes

it is important to have a broad perspective on learning when working with babies. She believes that when people discuss the infants learning, it usually is less directed at the word curriculum and more about pedagogies of listening, looking and loving as she believes that babies idea of learning consists of self, place, space and relationships.

enabling Environments

Goouch and Powell (2013) state that due to the fast-changing environment of the childcare setting, its important that practitioners are responsive, flexible and more receptive towards the infant.

The Psychology Notes HQ (2019) discusses Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory and how he believed that social environments effect the child's development. The theory consists of the different systems that are involved with the child, the systems consist of the Microsystems, mesosystems, exosystem, macrosystem and the chronosystem, these influences have different levels of closeness and contact to the child. Bronfenbrenner believed that the child in the middle is largely impacted by every individual and environment that is involved in their life, this could be a positive or negative influence on them. In relation to this, Welsh government (2019) shows a report of a vision for achieving high quality maternity services in Wales and discusses the five principles of maternity care that they provide, these principles are family centered care, safe and effective care, continuity of care, skilled multi professional teams and sustainable quality services. On the contrary to Bronfenbrenner views, this service focusses mainly on the family centered care as a whole rather than the child's centered care with child being in the middle. They believe that all women and families in Wales should be treated with dignity, compassion and respect and that those mothers should be listened to throughout their pregnancy, birth and postpartum care.



Save the children (2016) states that parents and carers play a key role and have a large influence on the child's development and believes that the home learning environment plays an important role in the child's life. Brodie (2018) discusses how children develop uniquely and explains how specific

circumstances could have a large impact on how a child develops, she believes that factors involved consist of living conditions at the time of birth, family circumstances and the child's own biology.

Welsh government (2021) state that children need experiences that also encourage enjoyment whilst having their physical needs met, they believe that outdoor play and including the use of different resources and materials allows the child to have awareness of their body whilst also having the ability to improve their balance, coordination and create an awareness of risk.

play in enabling environments



2 - ECMS (2018)

Pulis (2018) discusses that from birth a child uses their senses to get a feel for the world around them, these senses consist of touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. She talks about the importance of providing sensory experiences so that the child can develop on their senses from a young age, this helps the child to tune into their environment and develop on their language and problem solving skills. In relation to this, Welsh government (2019) discusses enabling experiences in the environment and state the importance of the inclusion of multi sensory activities which allows children to express themselves, they also talk about the requirement of children needing multiple materials to experiment with in order to expand on their creative development. In relation to this, Burgemeester (2014) talks about Piaget's view on play and his beliefs that play was based upon stimulating environments and schemas. one of the stages Piaget created was the sensorimotor stage and is from birth to 2 years old, this is when the child only has their senses to explore the world around them and creates the schema of building patterns and habits which involves what happens around them.

Forbes (2004) talks about how a treasure basket is created and explains that it is filled with specific objects that would have been chosen by a practitioner or the babies carer. She mentions the basket is designed for babies that are able to sit up with or without support and is designed to improve hand, eye and mouth coordination as the babies are able to explore their different senses and surroundings, they are able to select, touch, smell and try to taste the different objects. She discusses that the treasure baskets can also improve cognitive skills like problem solving and memory skills and believes it is beneficial to babies as they have a choice on when they want to explore and when they are ready to leave.



secure relationships

NCT (no date) states that the antenatal stage is just as important on the child's development as any other year. They believe that the maternal behaviours have a large impact on the individual foetus that is developing and state that the first 1000 days of being a parent are the most significant to the child's development as this has a larger impact and influence on the child's future. Parents explain that they experience a variety of different emotions when finding out they are expecting a child, emotions reported consist of happiness, excitement and shock as well as unprepared, nervous and fearful. (CymruWellWales, 2017)

Alexandra street (2008) states that the infant physically relies on parents for support and needs a lot of looking after, babies have feelings and are not yet able to validate their emotions. They state that when babies are responded to quickly by parents and have their needs met, they feel secure and less anxious, this links back to Bowlby's secure attachment theory (1958). HRP (2022) discuss Bowlby's theory and explain that his theory was that infants were programmed to find an attachment when they were born and that they need continuous care from their carers for the first 2 years of their life in order to prevent any problems such as social and emotional delays Bowlby believed that although children can form many connections and attachments, they usually have one special attachment that they rely on in order for the child to feel safe to explore their environments, this is usually their parents or carers. On the contrary to this, Nutbrown (2008) mentioned that Bowlby's theory needs to be questioned as the specific children in his study had been separated from families and parents and had different specific needs in comparison to other children in society.



Barriers to exceptional care

The welsh government (2019) discuss how at least a third of families that are part of the troubled family scheme have a child aged between 0-2 and they have aimed to try and tackle this issue by investing £920 million into troubled families that have experienced low mental health, unemployment and domestic violence. They believe that this is important as children without help, could potentially suffer with delayed development, they are also trying to help mothers at the preconception stage as they believe that mentally and physically healthy and fit parents at the start of pregnancy are usually more likely to have healthier babies when they are born. On the other hand, Welsh government (2018) discusses the statistics of parents and discuss that younger mothers are more likely to smoke, have a lack of nutrients and are less likely to breastfeed, these statistics for younger parents shows that they have a lack of support and information. In addition to this, Gerhardt (2015) talks about how consuming alcohol, being malnourished and having a high level of stress can affect the baby negatively. She states

that what a mother eats has the biggest impact on the foetus for the first three months from conception which shows the foetus needs many ingredients to develop healthily and discusses when a parent heavily drinks this can have a massive impact on the foetus's brain development in the first few weeks. She also goes on to mention that stress can impact the foetus's appetite and food intake, however, she was very surprised about the lack of awareness parents had towards the potential effects high levels of stress could create, practitioners could help parents by supporting and informing them more about these effects.

Nutrizious (2014) states that having the right nutrition in the first 1000 days can save more than a million lives, prevent diseases such as obesity and diabetes and improve a Child's learning and achievement potential. In thought of this, Welsh government (2019) aim to try to prevent the nutritional issues that the parents may have continuing onto the child by implementing the healthy child programme which is for 0-5 years old and is in place to support parents, reduce inequalities, promote the child's developmental, nutritional needs and improve the child's overall health. Nutrizious (2014) talks about the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement. This is founded based on the principle that everyone has a right to food and good nutrition. It aims to gather multi agencies such as the United Nations and governments to improve nutrition.



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