

The first 1000 days-3000 words, Digital scrapbook

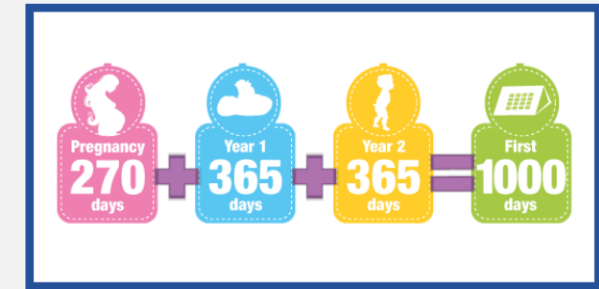
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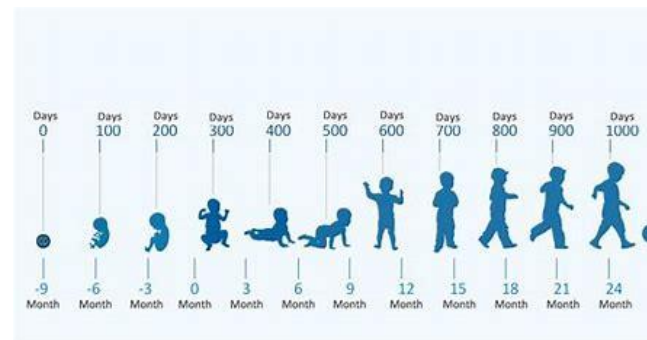




Introduction



The first 1000 days are important because it is known for being a key period of rapid development for children, which is required to have a holistic approach. Especially in the first 1000 days of life, it is critical to give the newborn a healthy diet, a secure and loving home environment, and protection. The first 1000 days means the period of a child's life between the time they were born and till the age of 3 years during rapid growth and development which is a Critical time for children and their mothers. Children are born ready to learn, through the years their primary educators, parents, relatives, and other carers help them acquire the skills necessary to become independent and enjoy successful, healthy lives. The early child development stage of development includes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the child.



What happens during the early years process period impacts on the child for their later life. The children depend on the care they receive, the ability of their caregivers determines their progress. During the first six months to three years of life, language and cognitive development are extremely critical. Early brain development is disrupted and can result in cognitive, social, and behavioral delays in children who grow up in less stimulating environments. Early learning is possible for infants and young children, who pick up knowledge through seeing, acting, hearing, and touching. As people age, they pick up more knowledge. Their curiosity and sociability stem from their curiosity, which is their desire to interact with others through numerous means such as facial expressions, body language, sounds, and eye contact.

Prenatal

Research states that an observation from over the last 3 decades shows how and why experiences and mental health of women during pregnancy and the postnatal period is the most important for both the child and the mother's well-being. Having a creative imagination enriches and enables a pregnant couple. This facilitates the growth of the bond between a pregnant mother and their growing child. By viewing the unborn child as an individual rather than an inert organ. Relationships between parents and children that are emotionally available are supportive of the growth and well-being of the child and a reliable measure of the quality of interactions. We know that long before birth, the quality of the process of the attachment of a mother's prenatal attachment towards her unborn baby is essential for development (Branjerdporn et al., 2016).



According to Bowlby(1950s), the relationships that children build with their carers at an early age have a profound influence that lasts a lifetime. Bowlby states that the child's development is particularly important throughout the nine months leading up to birth. Throughout this period, the child experiences multiple developmental phases that mold their identity and physical features. Prenatal development is thought to be most important during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. The embryo forms its organs during this time. Also, the babies' brain will start to develop, and the baby will start to hear sounds from the outside world.



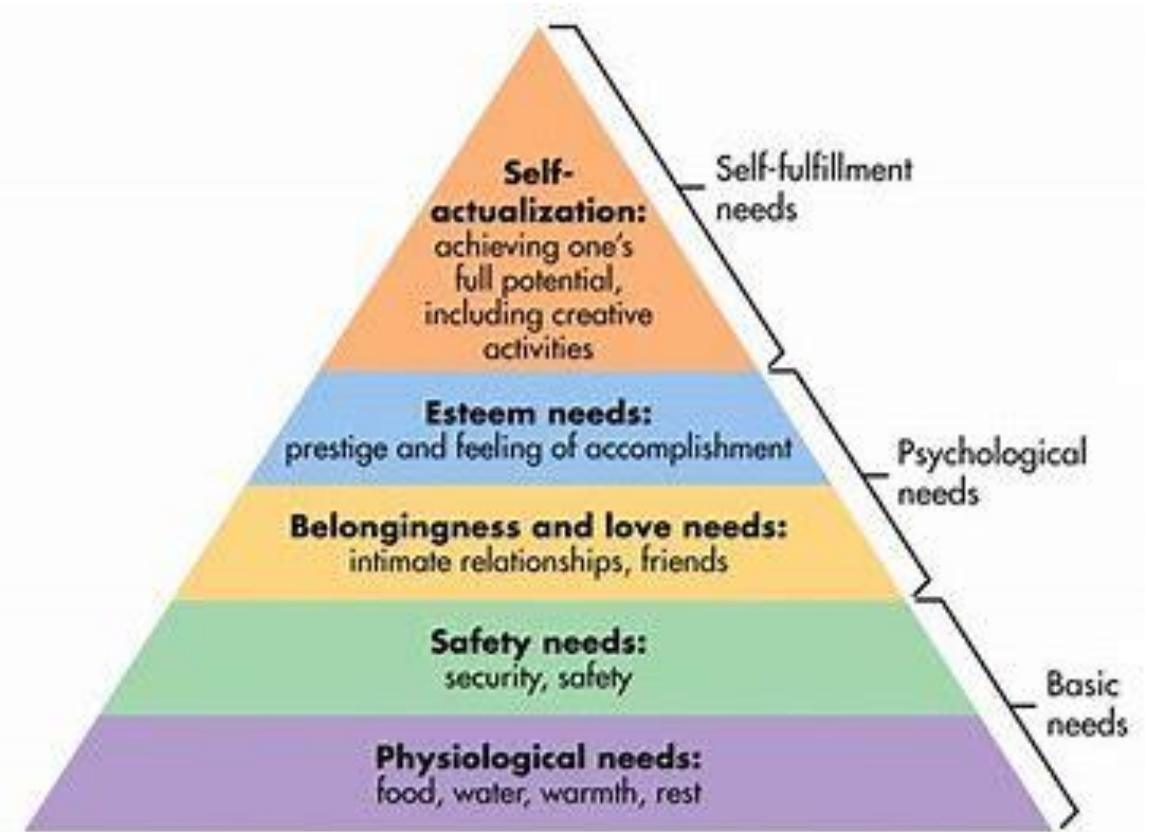
Caregiving

- Exceptional care in early years refers to quality of the education that is taking place that meets the children's appropriately enabling them to reach their full potential producing the greatest outcomes. It's important that the setting supports all the children equally including the children with special educational needs or disabilities promoting them to also reach their goals. It's important that the practitioners spend time with the children and take the time to get to know them, taking notice of their capabilities to ensure what methods of support or more help can be made available. Practitioners should make their setting a positive environment that is safe and an inclusive experience for every child.



Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs (1943)

Exceptional care is when the practitioner is ensuring the children's needs, which relates to the work of Maslow. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) has the five levels of hierarchy which are physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem and self-actualization. The lower-level basic needs like food, water and safety are the key needs that should be ensured before the higher-level needs can be met. In the opinion of Maslow (1943,1954) human needs were arranged in hierarchy. the practitioner needs to ensure that the needs from Maslow's work are provided to the children to reach their full potential as he believed children won't be able to function properly. As one of the most basic needs for children is food and water to be active, play is a big concern about the child's motivation and interests for them to learn to be independent or how to interact socially.





Emmi Pickler

To ensure exceptional care is taken place, children have freedom and do what they can instead of making them do it. Pickler saw a family when she visited Italy and noticed how the children were often put into positions, they were not naturally ready for like sitting up or being held upright to walk. Pickler believed 'All children have an innate body wisdom that naturally directs the unfolding of motor abilities.

Emmi Pickler said there was 7 key principles for children to receive exceptional care; uninterrupted, playtime, slow down, building trust with the individual that is looking after them, undivided attention, free movement meaning babies are never put into a position that they cannot get into by themselves, Respect to all the children, talk 'with' the children not 'to'. So as stated above Pickler's main motive was to ensure that babies have complete freedom of movement within the care setting. Pickler suggests the importance of tactful respectful care in the child's interaction with the adult who is looking after.





Professional partnerships

An early childhood educator's job is to help children and families during the first 100 days of a child's life by offering support and direction. The UK government claims that a child's early years have a fundamental impact on its development and influences it going forward. Early childhood educators are essential in providing the whole family with knowledge, advice and direction. Also, they have plans to identify, assist, and promote children's equality of opportunity and special educational needs and disabilities. A kid's learning and development can be greatly impacted by this early care, which can also completely help a youngster overcome an added need. Spending time with children allows settings to understand how they learn, what they like doing, what they might struggle with, and what areas they might need more assistance for to secure their learning. All of this contributes to laying firm groundwork for their future expansion and development.

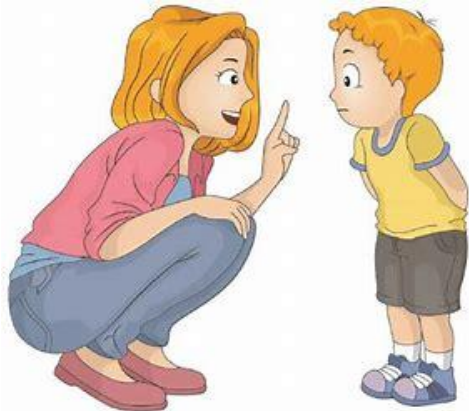
The importance of effective partnership working is to keep all parents and guardians in the loop with guidance, so they know how well their child is doing and their well-being. This links to Bronfenbreners theory ecological theory because the child should be at the centre of the care at all time shaped by the environment the child is in.



Challenges

Parents

Supplying good quality care can be tricky for some children as their parents may not be able to understand the rules and process of their chosen childcare setting, they have chosen for their child.



Parents can affect their child's quality of care negatively in various ways. The parents can be a challenge because if one is suffering mentally, they may find it challenging to provide their child with the correct amount of care that they need.

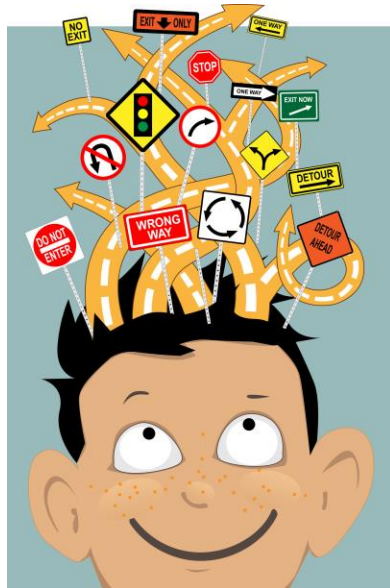


Another issue that could happen is parent conflict causing there to be a risk of mental health issues for the children that could also lead to social or behavior problems later in life



ASD or education learning difficulties

Another factor that additionally could affect the way the child's care is taken place is if the children have ASD any form of special needs as they will need extra attention and the child maybe restless and has a short attention span being on go all the time . They may need a one-to-one practitioner which links to the challenge of staff as there could not be enough for there to be a one to one for the ASD children or some may not want to do as there asked and don't show enough care for the special needs children treating them different to everyone else creating a negative environment for that child.

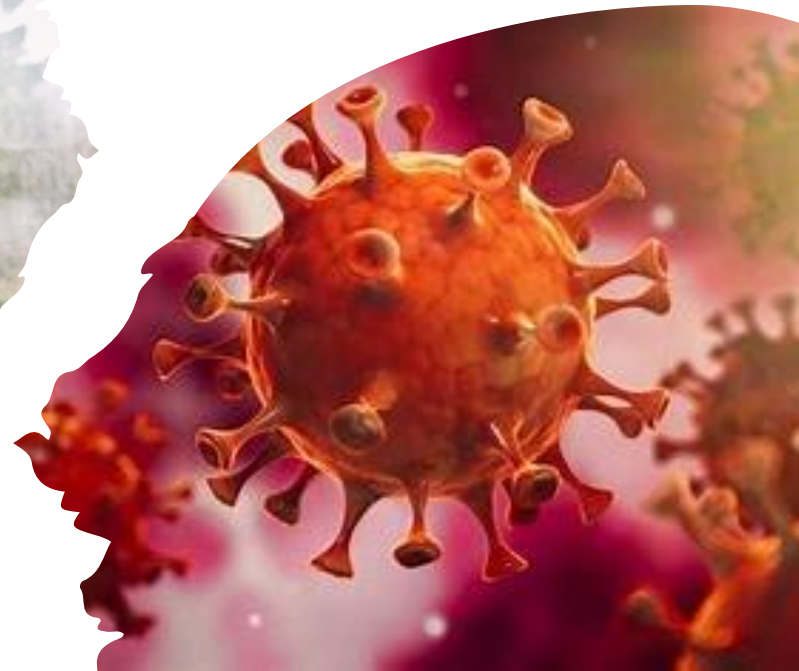


Environment

Yet another effect of the quality of care given to the children is the environment which could link to there not being enough space or the setting is restricted in the way they teach and the way there setting is set up with not enough resources as they may lack funding and may not have an outdoor area for the children to enjoy and experience the outdoor elements restricted them from their physical , social , cognitive and emotional developmental skills with the outdoors.

Coronavirus

- Furthermore, a major effect that has taken a toll on the quality of care is the virus Coronavirus which is well known as Covid. Covid has so many cases and millions of deaths worldwide. This illness affected every aspect of life for everyone including everyday activities like shopping from work and school. This illness caused people to stay indoors and to protect themselves from the virus, which affected some people negatively as it negatively affected their mental health. Another issue the pandemic caused was the closure of schools damaging the children's education, taking away the one place where children learn to socialise. This virus caused a loss of routine for everyone, causing sleep problems too.



Activities

During the first 1000 Days activities play a crucial role in shaping a child's brain development. These activities will help to stimulate their brain, promoting healthy growth, and establishing a stronger foundation for future learning. (Black et al., [2017](#); Britto et al., [2017](#); Richter, Daelmans, et al., [2017](#)) shares how The First 1000 Days is a critical period for reinforcing and establishing health development strategies. (Mariano et al., [2019](#); Pan et al., [2019](#)) suggests that while the health and nutrition factors important a wide range of other developmental skills take place in this age group, it's important to build upon the foundational developmental skills, this will therefore set a period set of groundwork for a child's growth and learning. By having more focus on these early years, it can help them to develop essential skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.



The practitioner can support their cognitive skills, social, emotional, and physical development. These activities can consist of being in an indoor environment and outdoor environment. When being outside our senses are activated creating a rich and memorable experience for everyone. Our senses allow us to engage with the outdoor environment, soaking in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and the textures of nature. Some examples of these activities and experiences are:



Treasure Baskets

Goldschmied (2004) thought it important for children to learn independently. She believed that even before babies can move around, they should have the chance to choose items to explore and experiment with whilst playing. Elinor developed the concept of the treasure basket with this in mind while she was employed in Italy working in orphanages in the late 40s. She states that the babies living at the orphanage were without toys and did not have access to any sensory stimulation. Because of the sudden popularity growth, you are most likely to find them within many Early Year setting programmes in the UK.



Research of Elinor's work states that the basket itself should be a round, low, and rigid-sided wicker basket (with no handles) filled with between 80 and 100 items different items that were safe and small enough to ensure that babies could hold, these were different in terms of content, texture, look, and scent. These items were seen to be everyday objects like rubber, wood, and fabric, also items that could be found in the natural environment such as pinecones, shells, and pebbles. Although, bought toys/items are not included. It is known that babies tend to learn from their senses so all items must be simple and resemble all five.



Story Telling

Story telling is an understandable and simple method for younger kids to understand, storytelling helps develop attention, language, imagination, and creativity. It introduces the fact that there are different ways of dealing with problems and helps highlight differences and similarities in some people's lives to our own. children tend to blossom when engaging with a book that they are reading. When reading all different books, they will grow and read stories with more complex words. Books will be a great tool to learn about the diverse world. Storytelling and reading can also help the children with developing their listening and communication skills.





Building a Tower

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/toddlers-learn-cause-and-effect/zvkhd6f>

Building a tower can be an enjoyable activity that can have some positive development benefits. Building blocks may just seem like a casual activity to some but according to the BBC (2024), building a tower can help increase the children's fine and gross motor skills as well as their coordination and problem-solving skills as they try to build a tower. The more tries the children make to build and knock down their towers the more they learn to expect what will happen and why and they will learn to build resilience after the practitioner teaches them it's ok.



Singing Nursery Rhymes

Singing nursery rhymes is not just enjoyable it will also benefit in helping with the children to develop and boost their language, communication, and literacy skills. Helping them to improve their social skills while reciting with their practitioner and peers around them. Singing is a fantastic way to help children develop cognitively, emotionally, and socially. Learning new songs introduces new vocabulary, helps their language capabilities, and helps with pronunciation. Most songs tend to have actions so will tend for the children to move around for example 'Head, shoulder, knees, and toes' is a children's favourite which will help with their physical development. Also, singing with the children is a good bonding experience for the child and the practitioner, guardian, or parent whilst building self-confidence.

Loose parts

When children play in environments with loose pieces, they have more resources available to them, enabling them to do more. They are objects and materials that the children can move, control and change in many ways. They offer the children the chance to have an imagination and to be creative in their play, transforming it into new ideas.

For example, when the children are visiting the beach there's lots of shells, water, sand, smells and sites. In natural environments like the beach typically offers more loose parts compared to a school playground 'in fixed play spaces, it's like having to paint with a limited palette of colours.' (Ivan Harper, Senior Playworker). Natural Loose parts can include straw, mud, and pinecones, whilst the building materials and tools consist of nails, hammers and planks and the scrap material that can be old tyres and any random found objects.



Nicholson (1971) was the individual who came up with the term 'loose parts' as he wrote and released a paper called "The Theory of Loose Parts". He described loose parts as "variables" he mentioned examples of things including shapes, and materials, smells, motion and music, many other physical occurrences such as electricity, magnetism, and gravity; chemical reactions, cooking, and fire; other people; and other living things, including words, concepts, ideas, and animals. All the children love to play, discover, invent and have fun with all the objects they love to play with.' American psychologist James J. Gibson (1979) states that the environment and objects themselves have a value and a meaning towards the one who perceives them.



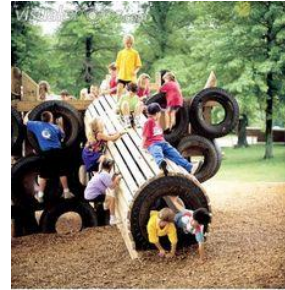
The benefits of loose parts are that it is beneficial and will help increase the levels of creativity a child has, the children will therefore become more active, will help to improve a child's physical coordination and will strengthen their cognitive skills.



Effective environments

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQR6x-onnDc>

Ensuring the environment, created as practitioners in the setting indoors and outdoors should be central to the children's authentic experience. It is known that when children are in their early years, exploring their surroundings is a crucial factor in their development. It is a key driver that helps them to grow and learn. Children learn most effectively in a secure setting with lots of opportunities to play and explore shielding themselves from abuse and sudden or ongoing stress.



Allowing them to engage in exploring the children will develop a better sense of belonging and an appreciation of the world around them. Providing an effective environment allows children to express themselves physically, creatively, and imaginatively. They will offer opportunities for the children to experience a sense of awe and wonder which will encourage a sense of curiosity about the world, motivating the children to know how to solve problems developing their creativity and critical thinking skills.

Ensuring the children have availability to a broad range of authentic resources such as noticing colourful displays on the walls that they can see, will help them to learn new words, expanding their vocabulary. It will also give them opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills by engaging in physical challenges. And as for the practitioners, it is important to be responsive and respectful to the range of emotions that young children may experience. To ensure the setting has a language rich environment the practitioner must have effective communication with the children, being creative and being responsive towards the children.





Making sure that the professionals establish a friendly atmosphere that promotes and encourages a vibrant Welsh culture. One way to celebrate and embrace diversity is by incorporating books and resources that will feature children or people from different races. This allows children to value and admire the unique qualities and characteristics of individuals from different races. It is a tremendous way to encourage and have respect for the beautiful differences that make each individual unique.



Clement, In Waters-Davies, 2022) says sometimes, the environments for young children's play and learning can be overlooked, neglected, or not given enough consideration. It is important to recognise their significance and ensuring that creating engaging and an enriching space for them is a major priority.



Froebel (Clement, in waters-Davies, 2022) shares that when it comes to how the environment impacts young children's play and learning, it is crucial to think about and discuss how these spaces are created. It is important to carefully consider how the environment can support and enhance their development. When setting up play environment for children, it is important to ensure that it is made to be open-ended and allows exploration. It is important to involve the children in the design process and let them manipulate the space based on their own ideas and interests. It is important to ensure their creativity, giving them freedom to shape their play experiences.

Early childhood educators need to think about the emotional environment as much as the physical one, both inside and outside the classroom. They should also consider the kids' safety and comfort level and the importance of the connections between parents and teachers. To promote children's learning and development, an enabling atmosphere is essential. It is common knowledge that kids learn and grow most effectively in loving, nurturing settings that cater to their specific needs and let them play and explore.



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