



The First **1000** Days

What do we mean by the first 1000 **days**?

The first 1000 days of a child's life refer to the conception up to their second birthday, these days are very **vital** for children's holistic development.

The first 1,000 days of existence have a large impact on a child's development. In the early days, a baby's genes interact with the environment to determine what kind of brain is needed for the rest of their life.



why is the first 1000 days *important*?

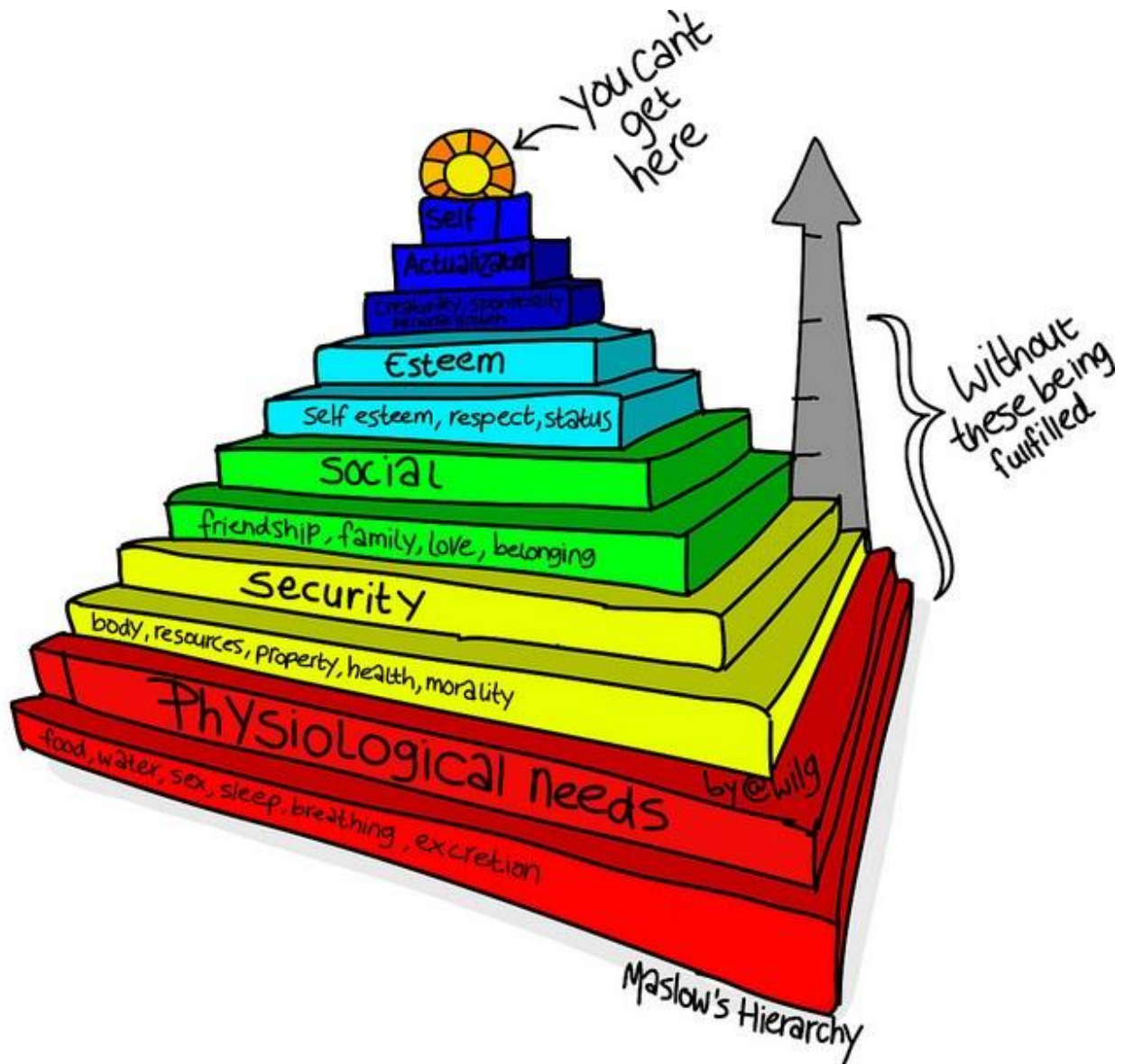


This is where a child starts their developmental processes, the foundation for the rest of their life. Education and Care have a huge impact on a child's holistic development. A baby's brain in the first 1000 days develops more quickly during this time than another period throughout their life. The way the brain moulds and adapts to its environment contributes to the sort of person the baby will grow into, through proper care and education. The first years of life are a critical opportunity for building healthy, resilient, and academically competent children, young people, and adults (Burton, 2015)

All areas of learning and development are intricately intertwined, young children develop and learn holistically, and their emotional and social development seems to form the bedrock of other areas. (David et al., 2003). Due to the fact children in this are not able to learn by themselves and care for themselves, adults are used to facilitators.



Needs of a child during the first 1000 days



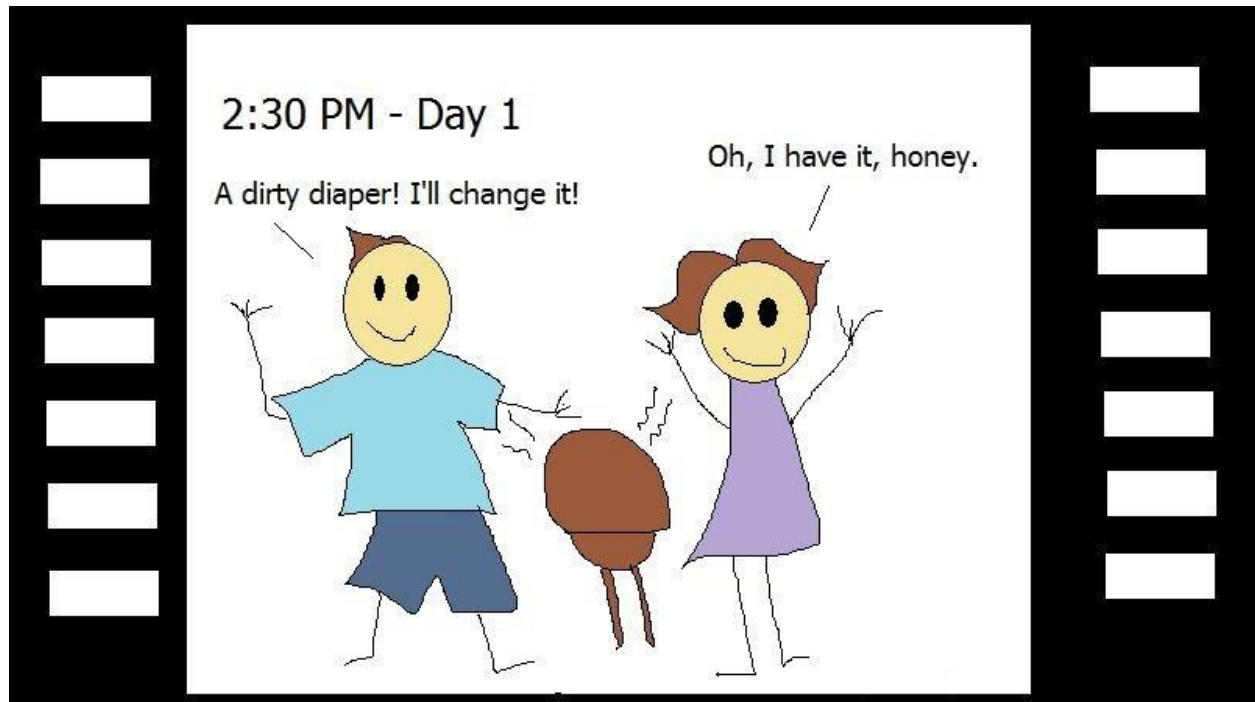
In this stage of life babies' needs must be met to promote overall holistic development, there needs are:

- healthy foods
- Loving relationships
- Safety and security
- Time to play
- A healthy environment

The right diet (nutrition) during pregnancy and in early childhood will help a baby's learning, physical skills and emotions to develop properly.

loving, secure relationships are vital for a child's development. It is through their relationships that babies learn to think, understand, communicate, show emotions, and behave. Relationships affect how they see the world and how they fit into society.

Role of Adults



The role for all enabling adults is to ensure that all their needs are met.

The moment you realize you are pregnant your role as a mother begins, which is the most key role one can play in a child's life and development. Research shows that a pregnant mother's health, nutrition, and stress levels can have an effect on the future of her baby. After the baby is born, their own physical environment, nutrition and relationships can have a life long impact on their health and well being.

It is with mothers that babies first experience safety, love, and form attachments. Erikson's first stage of psychosocial development, which takes place in a baby's first year of life, is trust vs mistrust. It is the responsibility of both parents; however, some may say it is the sole responsibility of the mother to make that there is successful in this stage so they can go on to have secure attachments. The pleasure of warmth and cuddling when a baby is being fed is as essential an ingredient for emotional development as the nutritious meal is for physical development. Erikson made it clear that a huge piece of accomplishing this first stage of development is the quality of parent-child relationships, babies need as much warm, loving contact with their parents as they can get. His theory states that babies will develop the strongest sense of security attachment if they know that adults will come running when they cry. By

meeting their needs quickly and consistently throughout their first year of life teachers are doing the opposite of spoiling.

According to Piaget this stage of cognitive development is classified as sensorimotor, this is where they learn through their senses, reflexes and manipulate materials. He believed that in the beginning babies' reactions to the world are purely reflexive, that intelligence began when reactions became purposeful. Piaget also stressed the importance of play as an important avenue for learning.



1 - importance of proper care for both mother and child

Enabling environment



An enabling environment is a rich and varied space where risks are minimized and professionally managed, and children are protected from harm and abuse.

An enabling environment plays a key role in supporting children's learning and development across all seven areas of the EYFS. It is well recognized that children learn and develop best in caring, supportive environments which respond to their individual needs. An enabling environment ensures that children grow and develop to be 'resilient, capable, confident and self-assured'.

The environment in which a child plays and learns has always been a crucial factor to consider when thinking about children's development, and much research takes place around this very subject. Giving children the physical and mental space in which to enable learning in a safe environment is key to their growth.

To ensure that the environment is enabling Childcare practitioners can apply these steps :

- Create an environment that is warm, welcoming, and nurturing and facilitates a sense of belonging.
- Offer a range of resources, which are familiar to babies, as well as activities that are new to them
- Ensure that the activities and environment offer room for outdoor and indoor play, sufficient space for children to move and collaborate, and encourage exploration and risk-taking and well monitored.
- Provide a range of activities which serve different purposes: inspire imagination and role play, exploration of personal relationships and feelings, problem solving, quiet time and reflection. Consider having a construction area, home corner, various toys and books, storytelling times, music, and art
- Ensure the activities and environment meet the needs of all the children who attend, from young babies.

Montessori believed that children learn best in a prepared environment, and it should be child centered. She also believed those children learnt language and other significant life skills, without conscious effort from them spend their time. For that reason, she thought that the environment for children need to be beautiful and orderly so that children can learn, they learn best through best through sensory experience



Enabling experiences



Vygotsky stated that children learn through play, social interaction and experiences. Giving children a wide range of experiences has a vital influence on their overall development.

We know from neuroscientists that children's brains are hungry for stimulation. Indeed, this is the case throughout our lives. What we touch, taste and see and what we talk about create a myriad of connections in our ever-changing brains. The term 'neuroplasticity' is used to describe the way that the brain is flexible, especially in early childhood. While the firing of neurons in response to stimulation is not visible, it is easy enough to see the effects of stimulation on children's development in more tangible ways.

First, children who have had a wide range of experiences tend to have a lot to say. This is because if there is an adult on hand or another child, it is normal for children to want to communicate to others about what they are doing and seeing. This is because communication and language are in their earliest phase as a social and emotional activity – a joining together of a shared experience.

To see how a child's brain develops through experiences, click the link below.

[click link](#)

[how the brain develops through experiences](#)



Referencing list

(e.g. Tsuji et al., 2008; Tsuji, 2008b)
Tsuji (2008a,b)
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