

Editorial Note on Brain Development

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Description

A child's brain develops up to age 5 more than at any other time in life. Early brain development has a permanent impact on a child's capability to learn and succeed in school and life. In the first few years the quality of a child's experiences of life whether it is positive or negative, helps shape how their brain develops. At birth, usually a baby's brain is about a quarter of the size of the normal adult brain. In the first year it doubles in size. By the age of 3 it keeps growing to around 80% of adult size and 90% closely full grown by the age of 5.

The brain is the command center of the human body. A new-born baby has all of the neurons they'll have for the rest of their life. The connections between these cells make the brain work. Brain connections allow us to move, think, communicate and do just about everything. The early years of childhood are crucial for making these connections. At least one million new synapses (neural connections) are made every second, more than at any other time in life.

For different abilities, like movement, language and emotion, different areas of the brain are responsible and develop at different rates. Brain development builds on its own, as connections finally link with each other in more difficult ways. This enables the child to move and speak and think in various ways.

Brain Connections

Children develop brain connections through daily experiences they get. They are built through good interactions with their parents and caregivers and by using their senses to interact with the world. A young child's daily experiences define which brain connections develop and which will stay for lifetime. A child's relation with the adults in their life plays the most important role on their brain development. Affectionate relationships with receptive, dependable adults are vital to a child's well development. These relationships start at home, with parents and family, but also with child care providers, teachers and other members of the community.

From birth, young children aid up invitations to involve with their parents and other adult caregivers. Babies do it with their expressions like cooing and smiling and crying. Toddlers express their needs and interests more directly. Each of these little invitations is a chance for the caregiver to be receptive to the child's needs. This "serve and return" process is necessary to the wiring of the brain. Knowingly or unknowingly parents and caregivers who give attention, respond and interact with their child are literally building the child's brain. That's why it's significant to talk, sing, read and play with young children from the day they're born, to provide them opportunities to discover their physical world, and to give safe, stable and nurturing environments.

Conclusion

The early years are the best chance for a child's brain for developing the connections they need to be healthy, capable, successful adults. The connections desired for many important, higher-level aptitudes like motivation, self-regulation, problem solving and communication are formed in these early years or not formed. It's quite difficult for the essential brain connections to be formed later in life. Children who get more positive interactions in their early stages go on to be better and more successful in life. Unfortunately, the reverse is true as well. Poverty, exposure to family violence and lack of access to quality early learning experiences can negatively impact a child's early brain development, and subsequently, their long-term success.