

Information to add to your newsletter (longer version)

Brain Awareness Week – March 10 – 14th

Early Childhood Years Are Most Important In Brain Development

Did you know that 85% of a child's brain is developed from birth to five years old?

A child's brain continues to develop long after birth. The term "brain development" refers to more than how smart a child is. It is the actual growth that takes place in the brain. The experiences a child has in the first few years creates the connections between brain cells to develop the foundation for relationships and learning.

Repeated positive and fun experiences with caring adults, strengthens the connections to create the growth of a brain. This makes the brain ready to get along with others and eager for more learning. However, constant exposure to stress, limited stimulation, poor nutrition and lack of a nurturing relationship all can create a brain being "wired" in a way that leads to emotional problems and difficulty learning. A growing brain adapts to what ever environment it is exposed to. It will adapt to a negative environment just as easily as it will adapt to a positive environment.

Understanding this makes us aware that parents and caregivers can have a long-lasting impact. Here are some simple things your child wants you to do to help boost his/her brain power.

Warm Responsive Car

Talk with me, hug me, attend to my needs. Smile at me and make me feel secure. Routines and rituals are important for my development.

Cuddle me, cradle me, hold me close. Let me know that I am loved. Hugs help me learn to trust and handle stress, now and when I'm grown.

Talk

My brain is making connections from what I hear you say. So, while we're together- at home, in the store, in the car – tell me what we're doing and seeing. Your words help me learn.

Safe, Healthy, Environment

Make sure I eat a variety of good foods, have regular checkups and my immunizations are current. Provide a safe environment for me to explore. During my first year, put me to sleep on my back. Sleep and rest give my brain time to process all I am learning.

Play

Play is how I discover the world. Lots of interaction and exploration help my brain form connections that make learning easier. Play with me a talk with me to help me understand. Limit my TV time.