

# The first 3 years



## What Makes a Child Smart?

The first 3 years of a child's life are crucial. If early childhood education is neglected, problems can arise that may never be overcome, leading to consequences for the child and the adults they become.

a booklet by



**ABC Nursery Pattaya**

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**ABC Nursery Pattaya**

109/265 moo 13, Nongprue Banglamung, Chonburi 20150 , Thailand

Tel.: 084-966 1234 email: abcnurserypattaya@yahoo.com

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# The first 3 years

In this Booklet we illustrate how to promote children’s development in their most important 3 years of their childhood. Babies are naturally born with a lot of skills and capabilities which need to be developed to reach their full potential.

As every Parent want only the best for their child but usually lacking experience (especially first-time parents) professional help is paramount.

In only few pages, we detail development stages and what can be done to succeed. Starting at the start from birth until reach age of 3 years parents will learn how to optimize their kids potential. Please take a few minutes to read through this very compacted lecture. Please enjoy .....

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# Start strong

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## When do we start to learn?

New born babies are ready to learn right after the birth ... **Babies are Born to Learn**

Peoples have the tendency to think there is nothing going on in the brain after birth but what's going on up there is ROCKET SCIENCE. In fact, the first 1000 days of life are like a big bang for the brain. An explosion of 86 billion neurons connecting to each other over 1 million times each second as babies interact with the world and the peoples around them. This connection form pathways that wire together different parts of the brain. So many pathways that starting around age 3 the brain hits the brakes and kicks into "use it" or "loose it" mode. There is this inflection point where the connections which has been used a lot get to be stronger and stronger, connections that aren't used disappear. Whether the connection is strengthened or dies back is based on the experience..... Experiences shapes the brain.

## Age 3

your baby's brain will have **made trillions of connections vital for learning** among its brain cells.

Our brain grows faster in the first 5 year than ever will again. The older we get the harder is to change what's there. This is why this early period is so important. If you miss the right experience or disrupt those connections then you have some weak foundation, then your brain has to deal with it for the rest of your life. Scientists say it can also determine whether we succeed in life and increases the chances of who can become either prime ministers or prisoners.

## Age 3

**80% of your baby's brain is developed.** By age 2 your baby's brain will have **doubled in size** from birth.

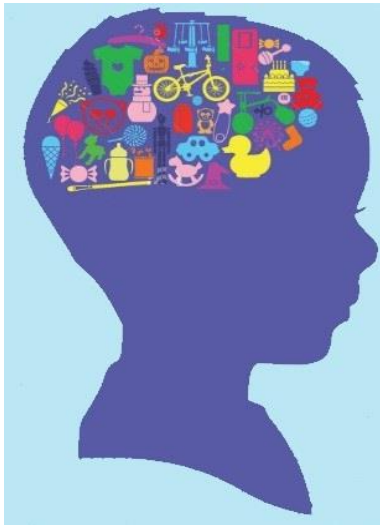
What is the biggest impact how the brain gets wired.... It is us. Social interactions and experiences are brain food for the child's healthy development. If we don't get that right then from then on, we are fixing something which is broken.

**So, starting strong is very important and gives the child a head start for life.**

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# Accelerate from Zero to Three

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**Brain connections** effect the way we learn and think (Intellect), the way we coordinate our body (Physic), the way we manage feelings (Emotions) and the way we build relationships with others (Social behavior).

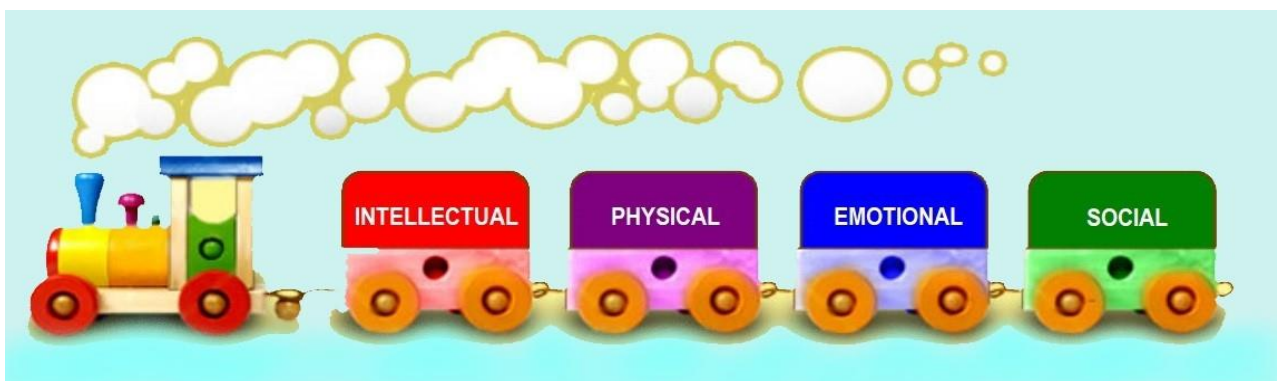
What does your baby need to build healthy brain connections?

**Social Interactions** and **Experiences** are the main contributor for to animate brain connections and for the development of the four milestones Intellect, Physic, Emotions and Social behavior. The amount and quality of care, stimulation and interaction children receive in their early years makes all the difference. As more the brain and other body parts are getting stimulated the better and stronger the correlations of brain and muscles getting.

## How to accelerate the zero to three development?

A good balanced development through stimulation, encouragement, challenges, repetitions, explorations, guided play will foster experience. This must happen through careful designed programs and carefully transmitted to the children through a safe and happy, stimulating environment with friendly, yet exciting atmosphere that empowers children with the tools to help them to reach their full potential.

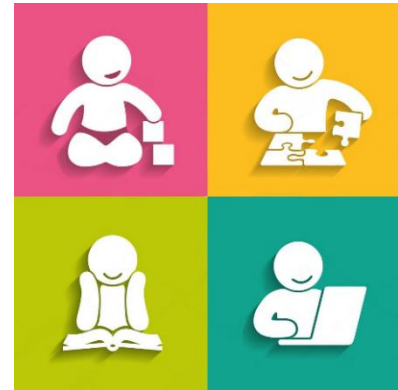
Stimulating the basic 5 human senses (see, hear, smell, taste and touch) and the many more senses which scientists believe humans have on a daily basis is crucial.



If we want our children to excel in all walks of life, it is important to understand how they develop **intellectually, physically, emotionally** and **socially**. All these developmental milestones correlate with each other as well.

## **Intellectual Development**

Intellectual development refers to growth in a child’s capacity for thinking, conceptualizing, making judgements and comparisons, and reasoning. It is usually characterized by how various mental processes—attention span, understanding information, learning, remembering, problem solving and thinking—develop from birth until adulthood. It includes the ability to communicate, to think in creative and abstract terms, make sense of the world around them, be able to make judgements and reach conclusions.



How to promote intellectual development in children?

**Develop problem-solving skills.** give the child a chance to struggle helps him to learn how to solve problems on his own such figuring out a puzzle and playing brain games or mastering challenges. Encourage them to come up with original ideas, while waiting and listening to them patiently.

**Improve memory skills.** Since memory is a complex process, we can employ a range of strategies to help the children recall information. We can teach them how to remember the sequence of letters of the alphabet and numbers, names of animals using their unique attributes, and names of friends and name of body parts, etc.

**Improve attention spans.** In average a normal attention span of a toddler last only a few minutes. Increasing attention span can play a vital role in the cognitive development in your kids. How much attention your children pay on a task depends on whether they are enjoying it or not. Since kids entering school have to perform more structured, repetitive, and academic tasks, we need to make their tasks interesting for them and change the activities on a regular basis every 15 to 20 minutes.

**Develop Language skills.** Learning to talk is a monumental stage for children and an exciting time for parents. Learning how to communicate is quite complicated. The good news is that children are programmed to be able to do it, but they do need lots of input from adults to be able to kickstart this process. This needs to be direct, face-to-face input from real human beings. As a result, the more we talk to a child and support their language, the more progress they will make. We can add extra dimensions by communicating two ways, singing songs together on a regular basis, playing lots of games with words or reading books.

**Improve Creativity skills.** Creativity is about more than creating art and choosing the colors for a painting or drawing. It is a way of thinking, problem solving and applying knowledge, inventing and exploring, out-of-the-box thinking.

The best way to encourage the child’s creativity is to let them play. When children have the time and space to play and they get provided with specific tools they get creative. Some of the basic equipment includes playdough and blocks, books, drawing materials, objects to make sounds with, or use everyday materials that might seem useless to spark creative work. Also engaging them in creative activities like art, singing, dancing, craft, roll play. Encourage children by letting them lead creative activities, give them the chance to follow their own ideas and make decisions. Tolerate the “offbeat”, let children know that it is not always critical to have the “correct” answer to the problem, praising them on their achieved result.

## Physical Development

Physical development is the process in which your child's body grows and acquires movement, which includes gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and hand-eye coordination

How to promote physical development in children?



Improve Gross motor skills. Gross motor skills refer to controlling large parts of the body such as arms and legs.

As children begin to walk and have overcome their “tummy time” it is important that gross motor skill development starts. Bigger muscles and their coordination can be enhanced by specific developed activities as in example obstacle courses, sensory walks, balancing activities, ball throwing/catching, hopping on one leg, etc.

Improve Fine motor skills. Fine motor skills refer to controlling small body parts such as hands and fingers.

Smaller muscles and their coordination are important in life which helps children do things like eating, writing, manipulating objects and getting dressed. Depending on age the development activities should start as simple as in example stacking blocks, tear paper into pieces, painting with fingers and objects and then continue with more difficult tasks as putting beads on a rope, forming playdough and coloring and writing activities. Naturally the hand and finger growth is in no rush and takes time, at age of 3 they are less than 50% developed. This is varying from child to child and explains why many children are unable to write early.

Improve Hand-Eye coordination, Hand-Eye coordination skill is the ability to perform movements with the hands while being guided by the eyes. It is a joint effort between the motor skills and the sensory system. These skills can be improved by exercises as in example catching balls, drawing along a line, sticking or dropping small objects into a hole, solving jigsaw puzzles and eating with utensils.

Improve health and growth. There can be done much to keep the children healthy and improve coordination, body speed and agility, strengthening muscles and immune system.

- *Keep Kids Active.* Being physically active daily by doing sports or exercises can ensure children's health. Doing safe and fun activities that strengthen their bones and muscles, as well as raise their breathing and heart rates.
- *Promote Proper Sleeping Hours and Sleeping Patterns.* Sleep is an important part of a healthy childhood. Toddlers need at least 11 hours daily sleep best split up between nighttime sleeping and a nap or two during the daytime. Good sleep helps calm the mind and let active bodies rest.
- *Provide Kids with a Healthy and Loving Environment.* A healthy environment consists of safe and clean surroundings. Everything children can reach, touch or can run into should be clean and safe (i.e., removing or covering sharp corners). Cleanliness and hygiene standards should be followed. With love and support Children should be introduced to safety habits and learn how to protect themselves.

- *Get Check-Ups and Immunizations.* Routine check-ups, including eye exams and dental care, help provide ways to identify and address health problems as early as possible. Getting the child vaccinated can help them avoid illnesses and diseases. Beside regular doctor visits the growth must be monitored and recorded (i.e., weight to height graphs) to ensure a healthy physical development and also intellectual and emotional/social development needs to be assessed and recorded regularly.
- *Provide Healthy Meals and Snacks.* Children need to eat foods that are rich in nutrients (calcium, proteins, etc.), vitamins, and minerals that can help give them energy, build strong bones, and fight diseases and other health conditions. A healthy diet enables optimal skeletal and physical growth and optimal brain development. Some good examples of food include grains (rice, wheats, pasta), vegetables and fruits, milk products, meats Fish and eggs. Avoid excessive use of sugar and salts and oil/fats. Children should be encouraged to choose healthy meals and snacks by themselves while they're still young. We can help them have a healthy relationship with food by doing activities related to food as in example let them play with textures, colors, and smells of real food, doing simple cooking activities, involving them in food shopping activities.

60%

of your baby's caloric intake is used for **brain development**

## **Emotional & Social Development**

Under social-emotional development children acquire skills that allow them to interact with other people, and to express and control their emotions. It includes forming relationships, learning social skills, caring for others, sharing of toys, self-reliance and making decisions.

Children learn social-emotional skills best when they grow up in a loving environment in a healthy family and often have the opportunity to play with other children. While interacting with other kids (older or younger) they learn how to play and communicate well with others, control feelings and emotions and solve problems that may arise in social situations. This should happen under a controlled environment as i.e., in nursery schools where teachers regulate emotions and ensure appropriate behavior practice. Such Institutions also know how to develop good emotion and social behaviors by performing activities as i.e. team building activities, Body language games, role playing, gesture songs (hello, thank you, sorry, bye-bye), stories, rewarding games, etc. They develop daily routines and establish "little" rules which helps children to find their path in the society.

Verbal communication might be the most obvious of the social skills. When we think of social interactions, we often think first of speaking with others, learn to speak and learn languages.

## The Benefits of Multiple Language Exposure in Babies

In the womb, your baby is already listening to your voice. By the time they are born, your baby can differentiate between the language of the mother and different languages (might be the mother too or the father). In fact, language differentiation is one thing your baby can do better than you. Your Baby Is Smarter Than You Think.



Parents often wonder if exposing infants to multiple languages will delay their ability to master a language. Certainly, a parent focused on just one language will have more time to expose a child to the many words of that particular language. Whereas a parent who is teaching multiple languages must divide their time between the vocabulary of several languages. However, bilingual children have

been found to ultimately have an equal or greater vocabulary versus their monolingual peers. There is also evidence that the early acquisition of multiple languages primes the brain to have better executive functioning skills, such as problem solving and attention shifting. They Will Become Fluent in Both Languages.

## The Benefits of Multiple Cultural Exposure in Babies



As the world grows smaller and smaller, it's important to understand the challenges – and benefits – of living among those who have different skin colors, different beliefs, different customs and languages, or simply look different. Children with a broader view of cultures would always be in a better position to cope with any situation and ambiance. The more liberal the children become through knowing the several cultures, the better their adaptability skills would become. This way, they will learn to pay respect and equal weightage of opinions of others, which are no way similar to their own. Remember, everybody is different.

Apart from regular education, exposure to multi-cultural environment and diversity in early age will widening the horizons of cultural views and ideas, and the kids will to grow into humble, flexible, adaptable human beings. Children must grow up without preconceptions.



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## Continue strong - Finish strong

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Although there is no finish line and learning is a lifelong process by age 3 children have completed their most important phase of life.

During the first year in the infant's life its development focused on physical development like growing and preparing for the first milestones like crawling, walking, smiling for the first time, and waving "bye-bye". Also, they learned to focus their vision, reach out, explore, and learned about the things that are around them. During this stage it was most important to bond and develop a healthy relationship with their mother through i.e., breastfeeding, playing, cuddling, talking, etc. Infants age 4-12 months need 12–16 hours of sleep per 24 hours (including naps).

During the second year of life, growth slows down. Toddlers are moving around more, and are



aware of themselves and their surroundings. Their desire to explore new objects and people also is increasing. During this stage the growth focuses more on the Intellectual and Emotional/Social development. Physical development is developing more on the fine motor skills rather on the gross motor skills.

During the second year right after the child made the first steps and started to walk it is time to start a well-aimed Early Childhood Education program.

As explained earlier in this booklet Early Childhood Education is so important for children. A well experienced Nursery School is the right partner who can support parents and make sure the children get what they deserve. Remember that your child's brain is a sponge and need to be fed constantly. Parents alone usually are overwhelmed and need help. A good Nursery Schools makes sure children developing to the best of their ability. A Nursery School with a "feel like home environment" who treat children with love and respect make it easy for the children (and also for the parents) to adapt to the new academic surroundings. Early Childhood Education is not just about learning academic skills for school. It's about building the whole of a child. As earlier this education starts the easier it is to shape children and prepare them for a successful entrance to the school and to succeed in life.

Here are some more reasons you should enroll your child in a Nursery School today:

- Established Nursery Schools have a long range of Experiences as they have helped to raise hundreds of children. They have seen it all.
- Nursery Schools monitor child's development progress by measure Intellect, Physic, Emotion, Social Behavior growth and reporting to parents periodically.
- When children join nursery school, they are more likely to express their talents. Nursery school staffs are experienced professionals who can spot talent early and support.
- Naughty behaviors at home (as i.e., refusing to eat, snatching toys from other kids, too active etc.), are easily getting cured when kids spend quality time among well-behaved children and learn rules and manners.
- In a Nursery school which have children with different ages in their class the kids will learn from younger and older friends. Develop "big brother" "small sister" relationships.

- As many parents are first-time parents with not much experience, Nursery Schools can advise and guide parents through difficult times.
- Nursery Schools vastly contribute on avoiding spreading of diseases. They know how to detect contentious diseases (as hand-mouth-foot, chickenpox, RCV) on the daily health check and are able to advise parents on common illnesses.
- Nursery Schools supports potty training to the kids. Getting rid of diapers is not only a lifestyle change but also a cost factor.
- Nursery School prepares your child for school. They make sure the first day experience at the Nursery will be as smooth as possible for the child and also for the parents. While at the nursery the children soon adapt to the new learning environment and become prepared and better equipped for the entrance to the kindergarten and future learning.

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