



Brain Development – It's FUNdamental!

The way you respond to your children, especially in the early years, affects how the pathways in their brains are formed. Research tells us that children's experiences in the first three years of life are critical to their healthy physical, emotional and intellectual development. Children are very sensitive to their environment - the physical surroundings and the people around them. This is what makes the early years so important.

All of this can sound overwhelming, worrying parents that this job of raising children is too hard for them. The good news is that it doesn't take rocket scientists - or the newest, most sophisticated toys - to do a great job. The key ingredient is warm, responsive parents and caregivers. It should be fun! Rich environments and nurturing relationships between children and adults support growth in all aspects of a child's development.

Here are some web sites that parents and caregivers can visit to learn more about brain development. The links include information on the latest brain research and how adults can support and foster healthy brain development.

[ZERO TO THREE BrainWonders](#) Provides parents, caregivers and health care professionals with meaningful information about early brain development and the relationships between babies and their parents and caregivers that support intellectual and social-emotional development.

[ZERO TO THREE](#) Describes how play contributes to healthy development, including tips on what makes a good toy.

[Smart Start](#) Provides parents with information on brain development and understanding the latest brain research.

[American Academy of Pediatrics](#) Provides tips on behavior patterns between parents/caregivers and young children that promote early brain development.



Healthy brain development in the early years lasts a lifetime.