



**Because experiences early in life
critically impact
brain development
for learning, relationships,
behavior and health ...**

**... the children have the
heartfelt hope that every adult
understand what they need
most!**

www.BrainInsightsonline.com

Brain Basics: Insights & Ideas for You

Provided for you are 5 extremely easy to understand brain development basics. It makes a difference to your life and your child's future to realize how a young child is influenced by experiences. It really is critical to the healthy development of children to have the adults in their lives understand the positive difference we can so easily make!

It is my sincere hope that you enjoy the shared insights and activity ideas that you can incorporate into your everyday life. Feel free to share with others that also care about your child.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

A child is born with over 100 billion neurons or brain cells. These neurons make connections with each other to make up the wiring of the brain. The brain physically grows as these connections are made. It is primarily experience that influences the creation of these connections. Ninety percent of the brain develops by the age of five based on these experiences.

TIME TO JUST PLAY

Let me have time to just play, be creative, and use my developing imagination. Provide items that are safe for me to use. You might be amazed at the creative things my brain comes up with if I have free play time.

Items to get play started: Put a blanket over a table, give me plastic kitchen containers or utensils, junk mail, packing peanuts, cardboard boxes, etc.

Brain Insights

My brain will learn to imagine, and to be curious and creative by having lots of opportunities to experiment and explore. Play with real things on my own or with other children helps me also develop problem-solving skills.

EARLY EXPERIENCES

The brain is “experience dependent”. It has to have experiences to develop. After only eight months of experiences, an infant may already have 1,000 trillion connections created. Because the brain adapts to the environment it is exposed to, it will make connections based on either repeated negative experiences or repeated positive experiences. Providing fun learning opportunities are invaluable.

COMPARING THINGS IN NATURE

Take me outside or to a park with two bags. Have each of us collect leaves, stones, or shells in a bag. Afterwards let’s look at the ways the items in each bag are the same and the ways each one is different. When comparing, have me put the items in categories that I choose.

Brain Insight

Natural environments help my brain develop in several very positive ways. Time in nature reduces stress and increases attention span.

CREATING ABILITIES

The brain develops through a "use it or lose it" process: connections that are frequently used are retained. Other connections that are not repeatedly used will be pruned or eliminated so the active connections can become stronger. Abilities are developed through this process. Opportunities to move, play and explore with real objects is the way strong connections and abilities are developed best. Screens, worksheets and flashcards are not ideal ways to develop healthy brains. Physical activity, time spent outdoors, good nutrition, plenty of sleep, safe environments, regular routines, and predictable loving relationships all contribute to optimal brain growth.

A NEW BOOK

Have me create my own book. Have me cut pictures from magazines or junk mail and put each one in a plastic lunch bag. Write the words I tell you to go with the pictures and add this to each lunch bag. Put the bags together and tape the left side. Have me "read" the story to you.

Brain Insights

My brain needs a balance between down time and stimulation. Both are important to my development.

LEARNING LANGUAGE

Early adult-child interactions have a dramatic impact on brain development. Researchers have shown that when parents spoke to their infants often, children learned almost 300 more words by age two than did children whose parents rarely spoke to them. Exposure to language through television does not provide benefits. Children need to interact directly with others. Children need to hear people talk to them about what they are seeing and experiencing throughout the day for their brains to fully develop language skills.

MY OWN STORY

Provide books or magazines for me.
Encourage me to make up stories while
looking at the pictures.

Brain Insight

The imagination areas of my brain are
starting to develop. With my increasing use
of language, I am learning to combine these
brain skills to tell stories.

LOVING INTERACTIONS

Warm, responsive care meets the basic needs of young children. However, consistent care giving is not only comforting; it plays a *critical* role in healthy development. The way that parents and other caregivers respond to children directly affects the base of later development. Loving relationships have a positive impact on social-emotional development and learning throughout life.

NOTICE ALL OF THE GOOD

Pay attention to all of my good behaviors and all
of the things I am learning. When you notice the
positive things I do, make sure you let me know.
You can tell me you saw me doing something, or
you can give me a hug, smile, or thumbs up.

Brain Insight

My brain tunes into emotions in my environment
very quickly. Shouting and commands make
more connections in my brain areas that respond
to stress. Loving, caring and fun interactions
creates more positive brain connections.

ENJOY!



For more Information on brain development or easy activities you can do with your child to promote brain development visit:

www.braininsightsonline.com

braininsights®

***EASY Insights & Ideas ...
for busy caring parents & professionals
who want the confidence
of providing what REALLY
is best for children!***

A collage of several Brain Insights activity cards, each featuring a child's face and a title. The cards include: 'JOIN YOUR BABY', 'EYE HOLE IN ONE', 'HAND TO EYE', 'EASY MATHS', 'WALK THE TALK', 'LET'S LEARN HOW', 'LET'S LEARN HOW', and 'LET'S LEARN HOW'. Each card has a small Brain Insights logo in the top left corner.

***"A DEVELOPING BRAIN REQUIRES A HEALTHY, SAFE, PREDICTABLE,
STIMULATING & NURTURING ENVIRONMENT!"***