



Child Development

WIC

Deborah Turner, Ph.D.

 **What is Child Development?**

 **Why Early Identification?**

 **Domains**

 **Infants**

 **Toddlers**

 **Preschoolers**

Breaking the Ice



1. A toddler's brain is less active than an adult's brain.
2. All toddlers have tantrums 5 to 7 times per week.
3. Babies in the womb can smell before they are born.
4. Consistency is the most important factor effective discipline.
5. Learning more than one language improves cognitive ability.
6. Listening to classical music increases brain development in infants.

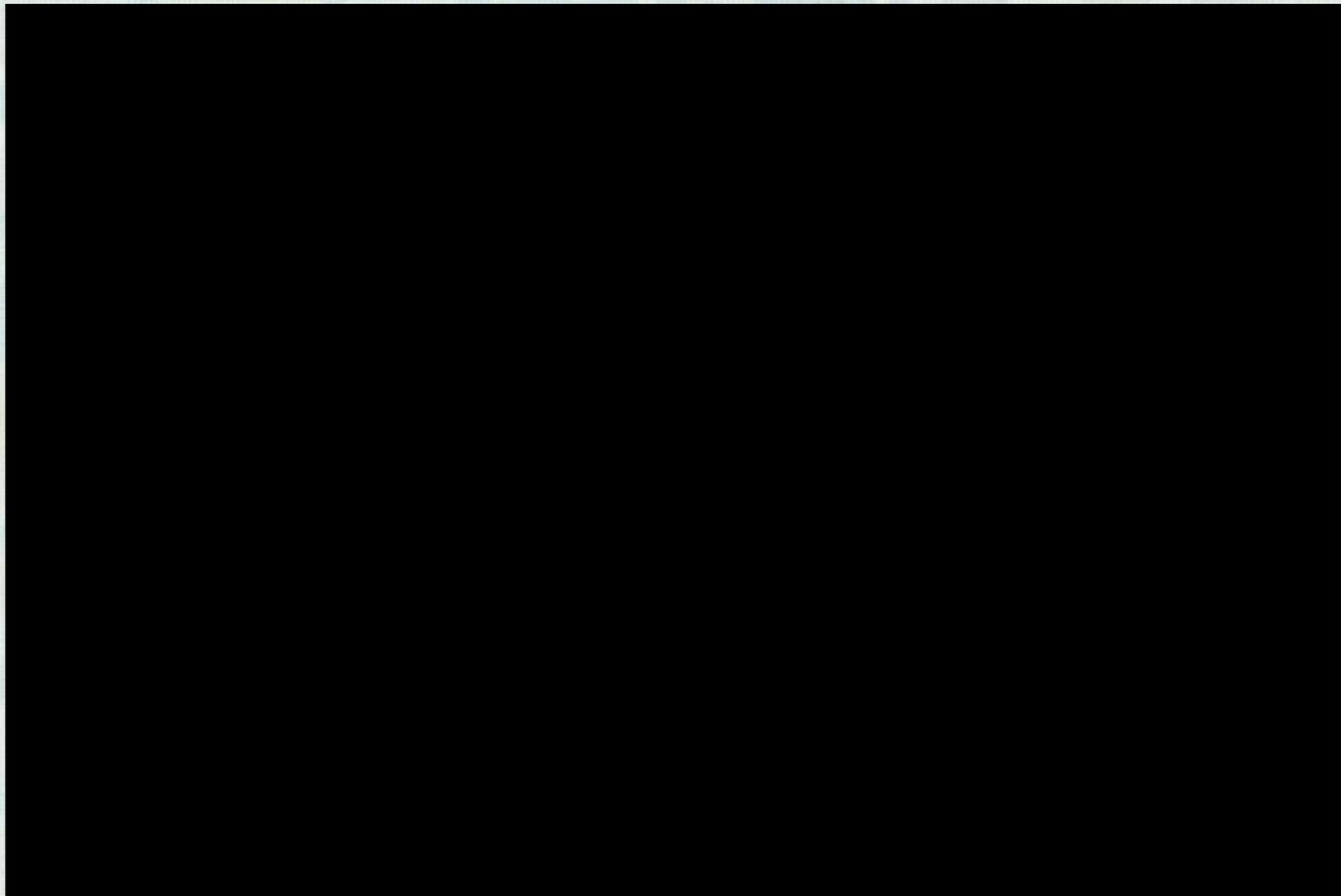
7. Nearly 1/3 of all children entering kindergarten are significantly behind their peers.
8. Physical touch can help babies grow.
9. Sitting too close to screens such as computers or TVs will harm children's eyesight.
10. Sugar increases children's activity level.
11. Talking baby-talk to infants will slow down their language development.
12. Videos like Baby Einstein can help increase brain development.

Child Development Definition

 **Child Development is the increase in abilities - physical, intellectual and social - through which a child progresses.**

Domains

- ◆ **Gross Motor**
- ◆ **Fine Motor**
- ◆ **Language and Communication**
- ◆ **Cognitive**
- ◆ **Social-Emotional**



Incidence of children identified as having a disability by age

At Birth

2.6%

Preschool

5.2%

School Age

12.7%

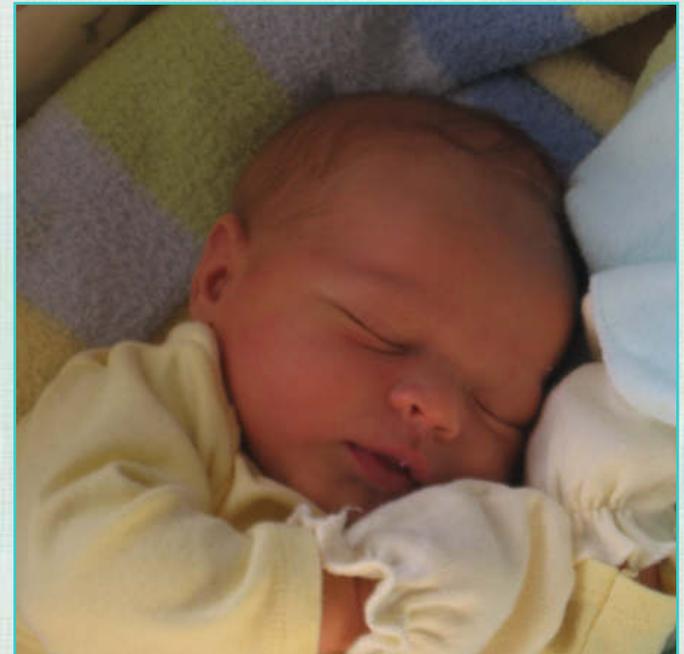
Early Intervention Works

Early Intervention Includes

- **Regional Center of the East Bay (Part C)**
- **School District Special Education (Part B)**
- **Medical Support**
- **Parent Information/Parent Behavior**
- **Early Care and Education**

Culture informs Development

- 🌸 The values, beliefs and practices that is shared between a group of people.
- 🌸 Culture operates through caretaking practices.
- 🌸 Recognize what you bring to the interaction.
- 🌸 Respect/honor diversity.



Parenting Beliefs



Foundations: Temperament

🌸 “Constitutionally based, individual differences in emotional and attentional reactivity and self regulation, influenced over time by heredity and experience” (Rothbart, 1981)

🌸 Is mediated through the Caregiver/Child relationship

🌸 “Goodness of fit”

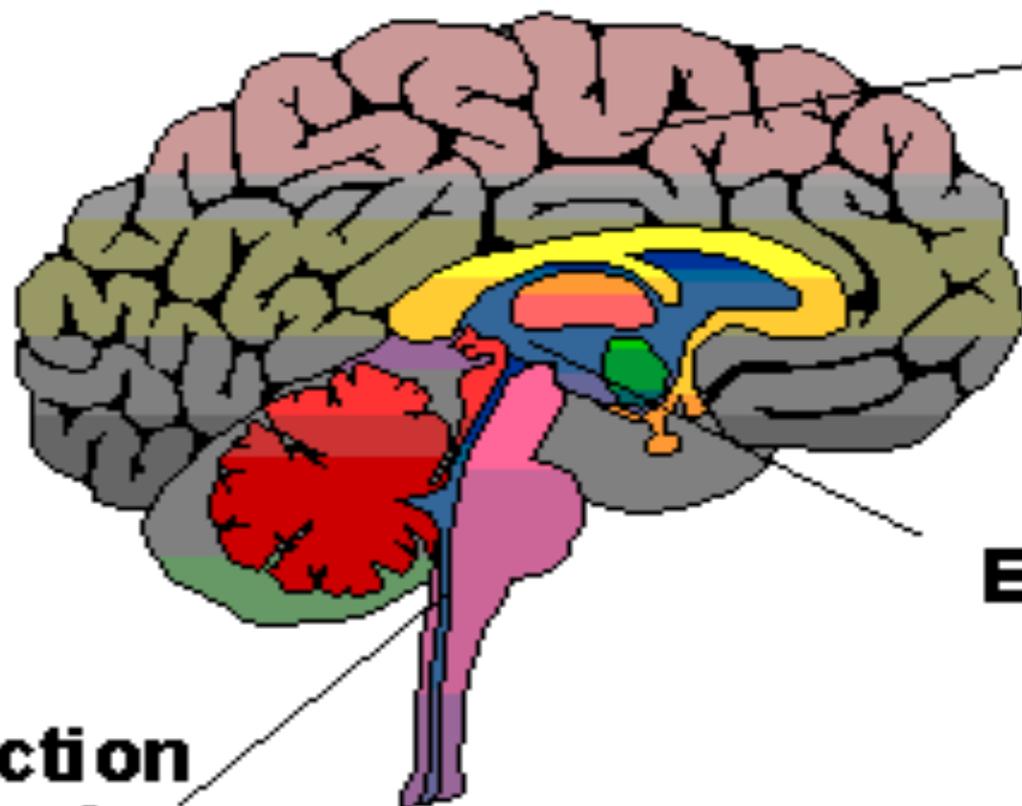
Infants: Relationships

- 🌸 **Healthy early development depends on nurturing and dependable relationships.**
- 🌸 **All mammals, including us, are born needing to connect to others.**
- 🌸 **Babies learn who they are by how they are treated.**
- 🌸 **Sensitive, responsive care means meeting babies where they are**



Infants: Brain Development

- 🌸 **Every experience impacts the development of the infant brain.**
- 🌸 **Normal, loving, responsive parenting is the key to healthy brain development.**
- 🌸 **Interactions will change the structure of the brain.**



**Thinking
Brain**
cognitive

**Emotional
Brain**
relational

**Action
Brain**
sensory/motor



- 🌸 **Toddlerhood is about moving out in the world to explore and returning for comfort and security**
- 🌸 **Toddlerhood is about learning to communicate.**
- 🌸 **Parents worry about discipline and compliance.**



Distress Tantrum

- ◆ Rage, fear, separation distress
- ◆ Unable to manage big feelings
- ◆ Parent role : soothe, calm, support

“Little Nero” Tantrum

- ◆ Control and Manipulation
- ◆ Absence of tears, able to articulate
- ◆ Parent role is to ignore, do not negotiate

Language Development

🌸 **Two word sentences**

🌸 **18 month language explosion (15 words to 150 words)**

🌸 **2/3 understandable**

🌸 **Conversations and Reading**





Preschoolers



 The preschool child needs to have opportunities to take initiative and to learn from both their successes and failures

Preschool Development

🌸 Academic Readiness

🌸 Pretend Play

🌸 Social Relationships

🌸 Language Development







TAKE-HOME MESSAGES: INFANTS

 **Protective factors lessen the effects of risk factors... the most important protective factor is a secure attachment to at least one caregiver**

 **Sensitive caregiving is the key to healthy child development**

TAKE HOME MESSAGES: Toddlers

- 🌸 **Toddlerhood is about learning and exploring and returning for security and comfort**
- 🌸 **Toddlers are learning about power and control**
- 🌸 **Toddlers need support and limits**
- 🌸 **Nothing works all the time**

TAKE HOME MESSAGES: Preschoolers

- 🌸 **School Readiness Readiness is more about communication and self-regulation than academics**
- 🌸 **Preschoolers learn about the world by acting on it**
- 🌸 **Preschoolers need opportunities to explore**

TAKE HOME MESSAGES: Supporting Parents

- ◆ The parent is the expert
- ◆ All parents have strengths
- ◆ Parenting is a process of trial and error
- ◆ Value passion where you find it
- ◆ Look for opportunities to support mastery



Help Me Grow

Alameda County

Deborah Turner

Deborah.turner@first5alameda.org