Facts and factors affecting your child's learning development

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SPHINGOMYELIN IN MILK

ARTICLE

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A child's cognitive development, central nervous system maturation, physical motor skills and senses, and environmental interaction is highly dependent on good and balanced nutrition.

Growth and development of your child’s brain and eyes begin in the womb itself.

When you become a parent, you will always want to give your kids the best in life. That is why many parents focus on their kid’s development. In fact, a person’s ability to learn and their performance later on in life is very much linked to their early development, so be sure to start them early!

Why early development is crucial?

Firstly, take a look at the 4 common elements of learning theories:

(1) Cognitive development	A child’s ability to think and understand
(2) Central Nervous System Maturation	Increases the speed at which children process information during formative years
(3) Use of physical motor skills and senses (includes emotions)	Empowers children to explore their world and develop cognitive understanding
(4) Stimulation/ environmental interaction	Promotes social interaction and social skills development

Your child will need to develop all the four elements of these learning theories as they continue to grow and absorb the information all around them.

(1) Cognitive development

A child’s ability to think and understand will shape their reasoning and problem solving skills. It will also have an impact on his information retention ability (memory). All these capabilities play a large role in learning.

(2) Central nervous system maturation

Growth and development of your child’s brain and eyes begin in the womb itself.

Ultimately, sound brain and eye development leads to normal cognition—the combination of both brain and eye function.

Rapid brain development happens early on in life. In fact, a 3-year-old toddler’s brain is twice as active as an adult’s, making them especially susceptible to experiences that might alter their future.

Eye development also starts in utero and continues after birth . Vision contributes as much as 80% to cognitive function and learning. The ability of a child also teaches them to make cognitive connections, adding on to the learning process.

(3) Use of physical motor skills and senses

A child’s overall development of muscles, bones, and tissue accretion also affect their learning ability. They use large muscle groups to sit, stand, walk, run, keep balance, and change positions. Physical growth and the development of motor skills can positively impact a child’s ability to learn by enabling him or her to better interact with his or her environment.

(4) Stimulation/Environmental interaction

Starting from birth, little ones learn how to make sense of their world through interactions with their parents. This teaches them how to interact with others, including developing relationships, cooperating, and responding to the feelings of others, which are factors that play important roles in helping them develop emotional and social skills.

This will eventually lead them to learn how to self-regulate—including self-soothing, self- control, emotional awareness, and empathy. All these play a critical role for their success in school, work, and life.

For example, preschoolers who can manage their emotions can focus on learning tasks rather than being overwhelmed by feelings, ultimately leading to better outcomes. It is important for parents to note that a foundation of strong, positive emotional and social skills can help maximize a young child's chances for success later in life.

Parents who want to focus on giving their children the best learning environment possible should surround their kids with:

- Language (hearing, talking, singing, and being read to)
- Play areas and toys
- A healthy family socioeconomic status
- Positive child-care and parenting behaviour

Nutrition plays a crucial role in your child's development

At the crux of it, nutrition is still incredibly important for parents to focus on when having their child's development in mind.

Physical and biological development are influenced by nutrition, which can positively (or negatively) impact a child's ability to learn. Good nutrition is always stressed by nutritionists, experts, doctors and other parents. These are some nutrients and how they can aid your child's mental and physical development.

Nutrient	**Role in supporting mental development**
DHA	Supports visual and cognitive development
Choline	Supports memory development

Nutrient	Role in supporting mental development
Lutein	Supports visual development and may support brain development. It also contains an antioxidant that filters harmful blue light
Phospholipids (including sphingomyelin)	Fundamental component of cell membranes, especially in nerve cells; sphingomyelin is a building block of myelin, a fatty membrane formation around neuronal axons that supports the efficient transportation of information throughout the brain
Iron	Supports mental (cognitive) and motor development
Vitamin B12	Key to supporting growth and maintenance of nerve tissue
Folate	Supports neurologic development
Vitamin A	Essential for low-light and colour vision

Nutrient	Role in supporting physical growth and development
Proteins	High quality protein alpha-lactalbumin supports growth and developmental processes as well as digestive health May facilitate the absorption of essential minerals and provides essential amino acids to support growth and development
Carbohydrates	An essential source of energy for growing babies and children
Fats	Main source of energy for babies; necessary for absorption of fat-soluble vitamins; essential for normal growth and maturation of many organ systems
Oligofructose	Supports digestive health as a source of prebiotic fiber
Calcium	Essential for bone mineralization and growth
Iodine	Necessary for the production of hormones that play a role in growth and development; especially important for brain development

Nutrient	Role in supporting physical growth and development
Nucleotides	Important for normal development, maturation, and repair of the digestive system and other rapidly growing tissues
Selenium	Plays a role in both the immune and endocrine systems. It is also an antioxidant.
Vitamin E	Antioxidant that helps support immune system function
Vitamin C	Important for immune system function and helps with iron absorption
Zinc	Critical for normal physical growth, neurologic development, and immune system function

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