

## Babies, Brains and Relationships: Unlocking Your Parenting Superpowers!

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## Many Thanks to ESIT

[www.del.wa.gov/esit](http://www.del.wa.gov/esit)

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## Today's Topics

- The Baby Brain
- What Relationships Do
- How Relationships and Memory Emerge and their Impacts on Grown-Ups
- What Can I Do?
- Resources



[www.earlychildhoodpolicy.com/ECTrain.html](http://www.earlychildhoodpolicy.com/ECTrain.html)

## The Baby Brain .... In Relationship

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## Brain Changing Prime Time

- Newborn – 400 grams
- 3 Year Old – 1100 grams
- Adult – 1500 grams

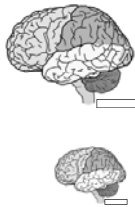


Image: [www.brainconnection.com](http://www.brainconnection.com)  
© 1999 Scientific Learning Corporation

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## Experience Changes the Brain

- "...our experiences are what create the unique connections and mold the basic structure of each individual's brain."
  - Siegel, D., Hartzell, M. (2003)
- "Neurons that fire together, wire together." – Hebb's Law
  - Donald Hebb (1949)
- Today will change your brain!

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### Not Just Weight Gain

Not all new connections are kept.




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National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (NSCDC)  
Working Paper #5 (2007)

### Two Sides to Plasticity

Neural circuits are more flexible before a particular pattern is shaped and fully activated


- NSCDC, #5, 2007



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[www.developingchild.net](http://www.developingchild.net)

### Building "Normal"



"Normal is as normal does --- every day."  
(Sheri Hill)


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### Babies Come Relationship Ready



Babies are born (hard-wired) to fit into social relationships

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Serve and Return

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### The Brain in Relationship

- Monkey See – Monkey Do
- Video Learning a No Go for Babies
- Sharing Brain Wave Patterns



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# What Relationships Do AKA You Are Powerful!


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# Early Relationships Are Important !!!

*“Each achievement – language and learning, social development, the emergence of self-regulation – occurs in the context of close relationships with others.”*

- From *Neurons to Neighborhoods*, National Academy of Science, 2000

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# What Does it Buy You?

- “A healthy, secure attachment generally means the child has been supported in:
  - learning coping skills,
  - helped to adapt to changes
  - learned to contain and soothe distress,
  - and learned to self-regulate their emotions and behaviors.”

Solchany & Pilnik (2008)

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# Skills Are Developed In Relationships

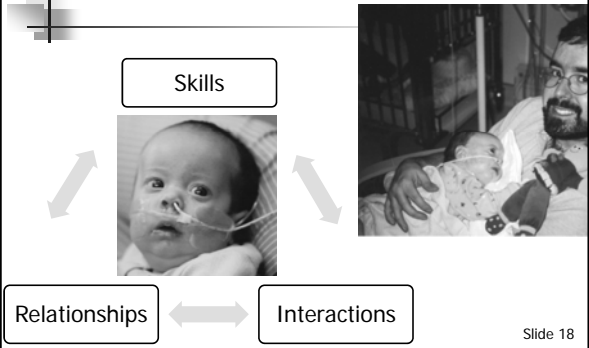


“The computational brain is controlled by the social brain”

Shonkoff, Seattle, 1/7/10

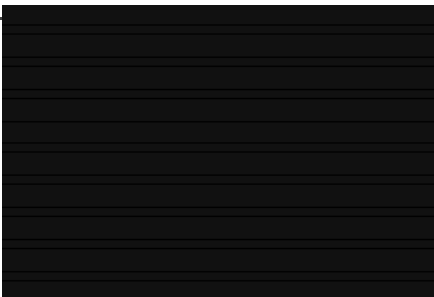
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# Skills Impact Relationships



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## Relationships Set the Stress Thermostat




[http://developingchild.harvard.edu/library/multimedia/inbrief\\_series](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/library/multimedia/inbrief_series)

## Babies Do Remember! And .... So Do You!!!!


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## The Power of Routines



## Expectations → The Way the World "Is"

"Representations of how things happen"  
Stern, D., Wash.D.C., 2000




This summary of experiences becomes part of memory.

## First Memories - Implicit Memory

"Implicit memory is a form of nonverbal memory that is present at birth and continues throughout the life span."  
• Siegel, D., Hartzell, M. (2003)

Amygdala




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## Not Just How It Is --- But What It Means

Repeated relationship experiences allow infants

- to understand the way things work,
- to develop a sense of their own importance,
- to understand about how others are,
- and to understand their relationships with others.


• John Bowlby, 1980



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## Explicit Memory

- Autobiographical Memory
- Narrative Memory
- Hippocampus Based
  - Not developed until about 3 and continues development until early 20s

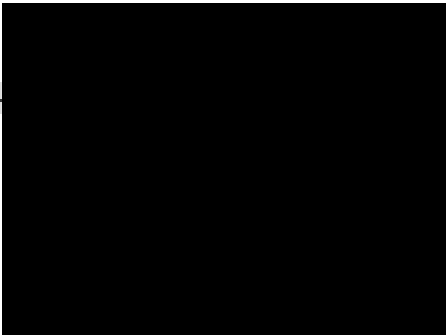


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## Why am I acting .... just like my mother?

- Why cut that ham?
- Powerful Remembering Context
  - Winnicott
- Babies Bring Up Your Stuff!!! .....

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Video Courtesy of Circle of Security in Spokane

[www.circleofsecurity.org](http://www.circleofsecurity.org)

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## What Can I Do?



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## Talk Talk Talk Talk Talk

- Give those little scientists lots of data points.
- ❖ Singing,
- ❖ Talking, and
- ❖ Reading with Babies




[www.ted.com/talks/patricia\\_kuhl\\_the\\_linguistic\\_genius\\_of\\_babies.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/patricia_kuhl_the_linguistic_genius_of_babies.html)

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## Value Social-Emotional Development

Talk about *FEEL*-ings not just *DO*-ings.



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## Recognize Young Children Do Have Mental Health

- Only 30% of parents know a child can experience sadness and fear by 6 months of age.
- 1 in 5 parents think a child can control their emotions, such as not having a tantrum when frustrated by 2 years old.

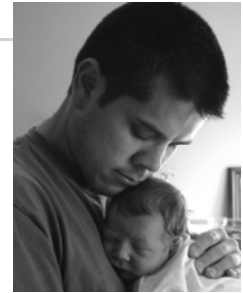
- ZERO TO THREE 2009 National Parent Survey
- [www.zerotothree.org/parentsurvey](http://www.zerotothree.org/parentsurvey)

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## Key Capacities

- Experience, regulate and express emotions
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships
- Explore the environment and learn

- [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)



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## Health and Well-Being

Infant mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development.

- [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)



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## Young Children and Relationships May Need Help

Sometimes mental health intervention is needed to get things "right side up" for young children and their caregivers.



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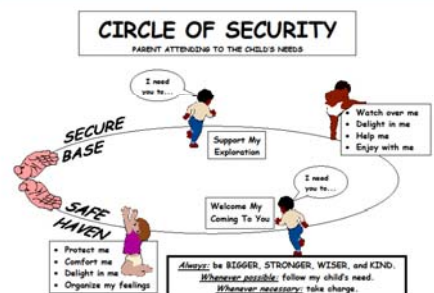
## Slow Down and Value Each Interaction

### Relationships Need Practice and Patience

The magic of everyday moments.

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## Find the Delight



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### Keep Looking For C(I)ues

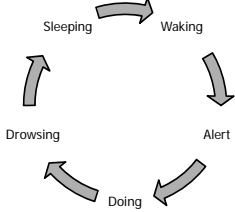
- Help your child find the next step.
- Be ready for some variety.



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### Families are Powerful Regulators

“When is your baby most comfortable?”




(Browne and Talmi, 12/10/10, NTI Phoenix, AZ)

Supporting Smooth Transitions

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### Value Your Emotions and Mental Health and Well Being



How are the grown-ups feeling?

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### Common Misunderstandings

- Only 34% of parents know a child can sense if parents are angry or sad and can be affected by these moods
  - Parents under 25 (41%)
  - Mothers (39%)
  - African American and Hispanic Parents (28%)

■ ZERO TO THREE 2009 National Parent Survey

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### Keep an Eye Out for Depression

*Speak Up When You're Down!*

- [www.speakup.wa.gov](http://www.speakup.wa.gov)
- 1-888-404-7763
- A statewide public post partum depression awareness campaign
- Great info
- Local and national resources




Do they have family support?

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### Reflect on What You Bring

What factors influence your thinking?

What is your shark music?



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Don't Forget the Basics

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(Almost)  
Everything I Need to Know  
About Being a Parent  
in  
25 Words or less

• *Always*: be **BIGGER, STRONGER, WISER, and KIND.**  
• *Whenever possible*: follow your child's need.  
• *Whenever necessary*: take charge.

© Cooper, Hoffman, Marvin, & Powell - 1998 [circleofsecurity.org](http://circleofsecurity.org)


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Help Everyone Remember



- You can't spoil a baby!!
- And .....

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Early Relationships Are Important!

Resources to Help  
(Starting Mostly in WA)

**S** = Resources Available in Spanish

WA Early Learning Symposium

Applying the Science of Early Childhood Development to State Policy and Practice: a Case for Action and a Call for Innovation (Nov. 2010)

[www.casey.org/resources/events/earlylearning/wa/default.htm](http://www.casey.org/resources/events/earlylearning/wa/default.htm)

- Watch videos of proceedings
- Lots of great local and national resources

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## How is the child developing?

- Child Profile – Developmental Charts and Letters
  - [www.childprofile.org](http://www.childprofile.org) A WA Resource **S**
- WithinReach – A WA Resource
  - [www.withinreachwa.org](http://www.withinreachwa.org) or 1.800.322.2588
  - Connections to your local early intervention program.
- [www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly) **S**
- [www.cdc.gov/parents/infants/](http://www.cdc.gov/parents/infants/)

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## WA Early Childhood Resources

- Department of Early Learning: [www.del.wa.gov](http://www.del.wa.gov) **S**
- Parent Trust for Washington Children: [www.parenttrust.org](http://www.parenttrust.org) They also have a Family Help Line 1-800-932-HOPE (4673).
  - Conscious Fathering – specifically for dads

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## WA Early Childhood Resources

- Foundation for Early Learning **S**
  - *Ten Simple Ways to Encourage Learning*  
[www.earlylearning.org](http://www.earlylearning.org)
- Thrive by Five Washington – **S**  
[www.thrivebyfivewa.org](http://www.thrivebyfivewa.org)
- Talaris – [www.talaris.org](http://www.talaris.org)
  - Parenting Counts – [www.parentingcounts.org](http://www.parentingcounts.org)
  - UW NCAST – Baby Cues Materials: [www.ncast.org](http://www.ncast.org)

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## Supporting Caregivers

- [www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org) (WithinReach) **S**
  - This website includes a benefit calculator for services such as food stamps and health insurance.
- Washington Information Network (WIN) 2-1-1
  - [www.win211.org](http://www.win211.org)
- Resources for Kinship Caregivers
  - [www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/) **S**
  - Great example there of an easy form so that relative and other non-parental caregivers can take kids in for health care
- Resources for Families with Incarcerated Parents **S**
  - [www.dshs.wa.gov/incarcerated/](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/incarcerated/)

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## Book Recommendations: For All Caregivers

- Siegel, D. & Hartzell, M. (2004) *Parenting from the Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive*. New York, NY: Penguin Paperback. (There are DVD's for both professionals and parents that go with this book and a wealth of other materials on mindful parenting at <http://drdansiegel.com> )
- Gottman, J (2004). *What am I feeling? The Five Steps of Emotion Coaching*. (There is a DVD that goes with this book and training materials that can be found at: [www.parentingcounts.org](http://www.parentingcounts.org) )
- Greenspan, S (2000). *Building Healthy Minds: The Six Experiences that Create Intelligence and Emotional Growth in Babies and Young Children*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing.

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## ZERO TO THREE – For Parents

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

Many of the resources at their [bookstore](#) come in Spanish and free materials (see below) can be purchased there in full color print. **S**

- **What's Best for My Baby and Me?:**  
A 3-Step Guide for Parents (comes in packs of 12)
  - Dr. Hill's favorite for families
- **Tons of Free Parent Brochures and Guides** **S**  
[www.zerotothree.org/about-us/areas-of-expertise/free-parent-brochures-and-guides](http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/areas-of-expertise/free-parent-brochures-and-guides)

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## More Resources for Parents

- Parenting Counts: [www.parentingcounts.org](http://www.parentingcounts.org)
- A Family Guidebook: Supporting Development of Newborns and Infants [www.eicolorado.org](http://www.eicolorado.org)
  - Part of their early intervention program but great for all. **S**
- She's One Smart Mom, She's Got: [www.Text4Baby.org](http://www.Text4Baby.org)
  - Text BABY to 511411 (Envia BEBE al 511411 para Español)
  - FREE messages each week on your cell phone to help you through your pregnancy and your baby's first year.
  - Text4baby is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition. **S**

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## Pyramid Model for Promoting Social-Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

- Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) for Young Children [www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/> **S**
  - Tons of great handouts for parents too like "Reading Your Child's Cues from Birth to Age 2" & "Making Life Easier: Running Errands"

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## This Emotional Life (PBS)

A dynamic interactive website, with a wealth of resources for families, based around the PBS television series on social-emotional and mental health and well-being across the lifespan.

[www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/](http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/)

[www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/attachment](http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/attachment)

[www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/postpartum](http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/postpartum)

[www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/campaign/early-moments-matter](http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/campaign/early-moments-matter)

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## Social Emotional Dev. Info Maternal and Child Health Library

### *For Families*

- **Social and Emotional Development in Kids & Teens** identifies resources for families about care, services, and support and to websites about promoting healthy social and emotional development. Separate sections present websites about infants and young children and about school-age children and adolescents. Another lists websites for adolescents. This family resource is available:

[www.mchlibrary.info/families/frb\\_Mental\\_Healthy.html](http://www.mchlibrary.info/families/frb_Mental_Healthy.html)

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## [www.thefatherstudy.com](http://www.thefatherstudy.com)

<http://sites.google.com/site/fathersoffussybabies/>

- The main goal of this study is to gather information about fathers who have babies under one year of age. We want to understand how fathers cope with being the father of a baby, what stresses them out, what they feel good about, what they feel bad about, and how they view their role as a father. Results from this study will help inform the development of services for fathers. Fathers are so often left out of research in child development and this study is just one example of a growing recognition of how important fathers are in the lives of their children...especially their babies!

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## References (not otherwise listed)

- Browne, J and Talmi, A (December 10, 2010) Individualized Family Service Plans for Newborns and Young Infants. ZERO TO THREE National Training Institute, Phoenix, AZ
- Lieberman, AF (1990) Culturally Sensitive Intervention with Children and Families. *Child and Adolescent Social Work*, 7(2) 101-119.
- Shonkoff, JP (January 7, 2010) *Symposium: Applying the Science of Early Childhood Development to State Policy*. Seattle, WA
- Shonkoff, J. P. & Phillips, D. A., Editors: Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Board on Children, Youth, & Families (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press
- Solchany, J & Pilnik, L (2008) Healthy Attachment for Very Young Children in Foster Care. *Child Law Practice Journal*, 27 (6)
  - Available to download on Dr. Hill's Court Training Web Page