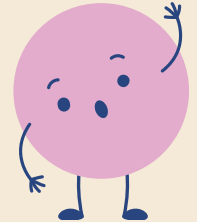


Brain Development



Here's what we know about brain development:

- The brain starts developing during pregnancy and grows most rapidly during the first 2,000 days (about 5–6 years) of life.
- More than 1 million new brain connections are made each second, and the brain continues to develop throughout childhood and into early adulthood.
- A child's genes, environment, early experiences, and relationships work together to build these connections and support healthy brain development.
- Some stress is normal, but too much stress can affect brain development; a caring, supportive response from parents and caregivers helps protect children.
- Healthy nutrition, sleep, and exercise are important for brain development, health, and overall wellness.



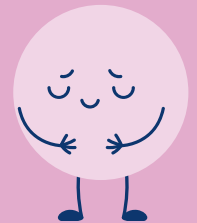
Trusting Relationships & Connection

Strong, responsive relationships provide the safety and connection that support healthy brain development and help children grow, learn, and thrive.

Supportive, responsive relationships can protect against and even help repair the effects of toxic stress. Stress can affect children when it is intense or lasts a long time without enough comfort and support. Caring, responsive relationships help protect children's developing brains and support healthy growth.

Engage in back-and-forth interactions. Simple exchanges like talking, smiling, and responding to sounds help build brain connections. For example, when your baby coos or babbles, respond by smiling, talking, or imitating their sounds.

Provide comfort and reassurance. Feeling safe and supported helps the brain focus on growth and learning. For example, gently soothing your child when they are upset, tired, or overwhelmed.



Play

Play supports brain development through movement, exploration, and interaction. Through play, children practice thinking, problem-solving, language, and emotional skills, especially when parents and caregivers are engaged.

Talk, read, and sing together. Everyday language-rich interactions support learning. For example, describe what you are doing, read a favourite book, or sing songs during daily routines like bath time or car rides.

Support System

Get connected to people, programs, and services that can help.

Connect with informal supports such as family, friends, neighbours, and other parents or caregivers in the community.



A bilingual Eastern Ontario service that connects children, youth, and families to the right mental health and related supports, when they need them.

613-260-2360 or 1-877-377-7775

Website: 1Call1Click.ca



Scan for support