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March 2006



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Brain Development

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month. This issue features resources on brain development.

Brain Development - Books

Baby Minds: Brain-Building Games Your Baby Will Love. Linda Acredolo, 2000. (530 A187 2000).

This guide for parents is based on the most current knowledge of how babies discover the world. It presents activities to develop babies' unique abilities and make the daily interactions of parent and child full of the joy of discovery for both.

Brain, Behaviour, and Iron in the Infant Diet. John Dobbing, 1990. (247.4 D632 1990 ECI).

This book examines whether iron deficiency in early life leads to deleterious changes in brain and or behavioral development and, in particular, whether it has any long lasting effects on intellectual capacity.

Brain Research and Childhood Education: Implications for Educators. Doris Bergen, 2001. (530 B495 2001).

This book, which uses research to offer information about brain growth and neurological development, provides educators the answers to some questions about brain research as it applies to education.

Building Your Baby's Brain: A Parent's Guide to the First Five Years. Diane Trister Dodge, 1999. (525 D633 1999).

This booklet contains illustrations and helpful charts to explain to parents what scientists know about brain development. The author explains why the first five years of life are so important to brain development. She offers suggestions for everyday activities to stimulate brain development.

Children with Acquired Brain Injury: Educating and Supporting Families. George H.S. Singer, 1996. (203.2 Si64 ECI).

The purpose of this book is to provide a resource for parents and service providers. The experience of acquired brain injury is revealed from a family perspective. Details of the kinds of supports needed and the practices of exemplary programs are provided.

Children with Traumatic Brain Injury: a Parent's Guide. Lisa Schoenbrodt, 2001. (203.2 S365 2001 ECI).

This guide, which is for parents of children who have had a traumatic brain injury, is a comprehensive reference that provides the support and information needed to cope and help their child recover.

Brain Development - Books (continued)

Como Estimular el Cerebro Infantil. Diane Trister Dodge, 1999. (525 D633s 1999).

This booklet, written in Spanish, contains illustrations and helpful charts to explain to parents what scientists know about brain development and why the first five years of life are so important to its development. This book shows how a few simple things parents can do every day will make a big difference.

Critical Thinking About Critical Periods. Donald B. Dailey, 2001. (525 B154 2001 ECI).

This book contains information from experts in the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and education discussing the importance of the first few years of an infant's life concerning its critical growth and brain development.

Effective Early Childhood Programs. Susan H. Landry, 2005. (560 L262e 2005 ECI).

This book harvests the knowledge that has been gained from the sciences of brain development, human development and early childhood education and translates that knowledge into usable guidelines for organized programs for three- and four-year-old children.

From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. Jack P. Shonkoff, 2000. (525 S559 2000).

This book presents the current knowledge about early childhood development and the effects of child care, family stress, brain development, and the parent's role in early development on children's development from before birth until the kindergarten years.

Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence. Robin Karr-Morse and Meredith S. Wiley, 1997. (326.1 K18 1997 ECI).

The authors examine the poisonous effect that neglect, abuse, trauma, injury, and toxicity have in the first thirty-three months of life. They make the case that infancy is the stage during which the foundations for trust, empathy, conscience, and lifelong learning and thinking are laid down. It is also the crucial stage during which a predisposition to violent behavior may be hardwired into the brain.

The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of Intelligence. Stanley Greenspan, 1997. (530 G815g 1997).

In this book the author discusses the six fundamental levels that form the architecture of our minds. Progress to these levels depends on a series of critical but subtle emotional transactions between an infant and a devoted caregiver.

The Human Mind Explained: an Owner's Guide to the Mysteries of the Mind. Susan A. Greenfield, 1996. (202.1 G837 1996 ECI).

This book, with extensive illustrations, explores every aspect of the human mind in five chapters: Surveying the Mind; Building the Brain; Inputs and Outputs; Far Horizons; and States of Mind.

Inside the Brain: Revolutionary Discoveries of How the Mind Works. Ronald Kotulak, 1997. (202.1 K87i 1997 RHB).

This book presents the latest scientific findings about the human brain and reveals new understandings about how nature builds the brain then develops it during early childhood. It also explores how the brain gets damaged and how it heals itself.

Magic Trees of the Mind: How to Nurture Your Child's Intelligence, Creativity, and Healthy Emotions from Birth Through Adolescence. Marian Diamond, 1998. (530 D537m 1998).

This book contains a description of how a child's brain develops and gives parents a collection of ideas for sensibly nurturing the child's growing mind.

Medical Aspects of Early Intervention. James A. Blackman, 1995. (200.8 B565 ECI).

This textbook includes a chapter on disorders in brain development.

Brain Development - Books (continued)

Pediatric Brain Injury: The Special Case of the Very Young Child. Carole Wedel Sellars and Candace Hill Vegter, 1996. (203.2 Se48 ECI).

This book was written to help parents understand the complexity of a child's recovery from brain injury. It includes an overview of brain injury in this age group and typical child development at this age. Discussions of therapy, the effect of the injury on the family, as well as the availability of community services are included.

Pediatric Traumatic Brain Injury: Proactive Intervention. Jean L. Blosser and Roberta DePompei, 1994. (203.2 B623).

This book is written for professionals from a variety of disciplines who are challenged daily by children and adolescents with traumatic brain injury (TBI). It is divided into four major parts: Part 1 provides an overview of TBI in the pediatric population and our philosophical orientation for assessment and treatment; Part 2 describes how to use problem-solving techniques to conduct functional assessments; Part 3 suggests treatment approaches based on the proactive, problem-solving approach; Through a case study Part 4 illustrates a proactive approach to intervention for a child with TBI.

Rethinking the Brain. Rima Shore, 1997. (530 S559r 1997).

This book, and the conference which inspired it, present an overview of neuroscientists' findings about the brain and suggests how these insights can guide and support our nation's efforts to promote the healthy development and learning of young children.

The Scientist in the Crib: Minds, Brains, and How Children Learn. Alison Gopnik, Patricia K. Kuhl, and Andrew N. Meltzoff, 1999. (530 G660 1999).

This book explains just how, and how much, babies and young children know and learn, and how much parents naturally teach them. The authors argue that nurture is our nature, and the drive to learn is our most important instinct.

Start Smart! Building Brain Power in the Early Years. Pam Schiller, 1999. (530 S334 1999).

This book presents simple, straightforward ways to boost brain power with active exploration, repetition, sensory exploration, laughter, and more. It contains information about how and why the brain develops.

What to Do About Your Brain-injured Child. Glenn Doman, 1994. (203.2 D711 ECI).

Based on decades of work performed at the Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential, this book discusses all aspects of brain damage in children.

The Youngest Minds: Parenting and Genes in the Development of Intellect and Emotions. Ann B. Barnett, 1998. (530 B273y 1998).

This book reveals what goes on in a child's brain during the first months and years of life by exploring children's genetic tendencies toward anger, fear, and other emotions. The authors provide information on how interactions with people can actually organize and reorganize a child's brain. They offer guidance to parents and caregivers by describing the essential characteristics of healthy parent-child relationships and good child care, as well as how the effects of bad early experiences can be overcome later in life.

Your Child's Growing Mind: A Practical Guide to Brain Development and Learning. Jane M. Healy, 1994. (530 H347).

This book serves as a guide to learning skills for children. The author begins by translating current scientific theories on nervous system development into practical information for parents. She then explains in detail how children develop language and memory, and addresses academic learning: reading, writing, spelling and mathematics.

Brain Development - Videos

ECI Teleconference: Brain Development. 44 min. (266.5 B932 2000).

This video is the fifth in a series from a June 9, 2000 teleconference in San Antonio. Neal Boris discusses what the current information on infant brain development means for ECI personnel in the field.

ECI Teleconference on Cognitive Development in Young Children. 120 min. (VT0442).

This video is a copy of the teleconference held February 25, 1999 to help participants become familiar with the current theories of cognitive development in young children, and gain insight into the new brain research and its implications for early childhood intervention.

ECI Teleconference on the Brain: Role of Early Experience on Neurodevelopment. 480 min. (VT0444).

These tapes of the ECI Teleconference on the Brain are in two parts. Each part consists of two tapes. It was broadcast from Omaha, Nebraska as part of Project Learn.

ECI Teleconference: Trauma and Attachment. 97 min. (266.5 B932 2000).

In this second tape of the June 9, 2000 San Antonio teleconference, Prachi Shah discusses how the infant's brain develops and the environmental influences on the infant's brain during the first years of growth. Stephanie Schick discusses the effects of traumatic experiences and attachment on the infant.

Childhood: Love's Labors. 57 min. (525 Am18).

This video, the third of a seven-part series, explores the period between six months and three years, when almost every day brings startling evidence of rapid maturation in brain and body. It is during these early months that observers can witness a baby's improved coordination, increased mobility, acquisition of language, and emerging sense of self. The video shows how babies and infants are not powerless but are instead active participants in a world they affect and change almost from birth.

Empieza Ya! Start Now! 16 min. in English and 17 min. in Spanish. (515 S761).

This video shows parents that from birth children need to be enriched through reading, communication, music, and play every day. These powerful activities form billions of connections in the infant's brain. The infant's brain develops fastest during the first three years of life, and this critical parent involvement improves the child's ability to learn throughout life. The first half of the video is in Spanish and the second half repeats the pictures but is spoken in English.

Feed Your Child's Future. 12 min. in English and 12 min. in Spanish. (VC7852).

A couple learns that high-iron foods and reading to their young son are important to his brain's growth and development.

The First Years Last Forever. 29 min. (VT0495).

This video, hosted by Rob Reiner, and accompanying computer disc, presents information from research on infant brain development supporting the importance of the relationship between the caregiver and the child in the critical first years of life.

From the Beginning: Developing Connectors in the Brain from Birth. 15 min. (525 A134 1995).

This program shows how the newborn baby's brain makes connections to develop sight, sound, and emotional attachments. If these chemical connections are not made in the brain by 12 to 18 months, the brain will never be able to make them.

Getting to Know your Premature Baby. 30 min. (VC6437).

This video gives parents of premature babies information concerning the health and development of the baby. It describes the health professionals and equipment in the neonatal ICU and encourages parents to visit and touch their baby. It explains the complications which may occur in premature infants, including those associated with brain development, hearing, eyesight, respiration, heart, the gastrointestinal system, hematology, and the muscular system.

Brain Development - Videos (continued)

Infant Development: A First Year Guide to Growth and Learning. 45 min. (VC4353).

This video covers the major physical, intellectual and emotional milestones of a baby's first year. It provides demonstrations to enhance understanding of the child and explains that he sets his own pace of growth and development. Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and a distinguished group of child care professionals are featured.

It Feels Good to Help your Baby Learn! 14 min. (VT0427).

This video is produced for the first time mom, who may or may not be a single, high school parent. It emphasizes that the baby's development begins at birth and stresses the role of mothers. Mothers can help the baby's brain to make its needed connections by doing simple things like touching, holding, talking, reading, and playing with the baby.

Living With Hope: Understanding Holoprosencephaly. 45 min. (VC7373).

Holoprosencephaly (HPE) is a neurological birth defect in which the fetal brain does not grow forward and divide as it should during early pregnancy. This program explores the nature of HPE, the wide range of its manifestations, its cause, treatment and probable outcomes.

The Newborn. 23 min. (525 F486).

The reactions of the newborn ten days after birth can be recognized for most important functions (sitting, standing, walking, grasping and social contact) in their incipient form. At this point, however, these capabilities are solely the result of innate reflexes. They disappear during the course of the first few months, as the brain is gradually able to take over the control of these movements. Early tests give the examining physician indications of possible damage to and developmental disorders of the newborn.

Portrait of Promise: Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome. 11 min. (VC6876).

This video describes how shaking a baby can damage the baby's brain and inflict long term effects. It provides tips in coping with a crying baby.

Los Primeros Anos Marcan Para Siempre. 30 min. (555.5 E79).

This video, the Spanish version of "The First Years Last Forever", is designed to help new parents and caregivers understand the new brain research and the vital importance of their relationship with the infant during the critical first years of life.

Ready for Life: First Impressions. 54 min. (525 K39 2000).

This documentary features six real Texas families as they welcome a new baby. These stories illustrate how children begin to develop the strength and confidence to face life's challenges in emotionally healthy ways. Dr. Bruce Perry narrates and discusses how important parental involvement is to the healthy brain development of the infant just a few hours old.

The Secret Life of the Brain. 60 min. (VC7538).

This video explores how the brain constructs itself from conception through the first year of life. This video examines the difficulties of premature babies and the delicate developmental process of the brain.

Shaping Youngest Minds. 23 min. (530 S377 1999).

This video shows the importance of day-to-day loving care composed of sights, sounds, noises, smells, touches, language and eye contact that will literally shape the infant's brain. At birth, the brain is remarkably unfinished; its 100 billion neurons are not yet connected. How the brain is wired for life depends on how the child experiences the world and forms attachments to parents, family, and caregivers.

Small Wonders: Early Brain Development. 12 min. (530 N277).

In this video, the importance of communication and touching between care givers and babies is linked to the development of a baby's brain.

Brain Development - Videos (continued)

Ten Things Every Child Needs. 60 min. (530 R273).

Ten simple things influence the brain development of children: interaction, loving touch, stable relationships, safe healthy environments, self esteem, quality child care, play, communication, music and reading. This video offers a simple checklist that parents, teachers, family child care providers and babysitters can follow to give children the best start in life.

Brain Development - Websites

Starting Smart: How Early Experiences Affect Brain Development: In this publication available on the Internet, the author explains new research on how the brain develops, windows of opportunity in brain development, the connection between emotional development and the infant brain, how trauma and chronic stress affect brain development and how to help families support healthy brain development. Available at: <http://www.zerotothree.org/startingsmart.pdf>

Parenting and Brain Development from the Talaris Research Institute: This website presents research-based information on infant brain development and early brain development in children, mainly ages birth to five years old. The information is geared toward parents and educators and includes topics such as empathy, early emotions and early memory development. Available at <http://www.talaris.org/synopsis.htm>

Memory Matters from KidsHealth.org: This article is written for children and describes human memory and memory disorders. It discusses amnesia, traumatic brain injuries, signs and diagnosis of a memory problem, and related topics. Available at http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/brain/memory.html

More Traumatic Brain Injury Resources are available at the Texas Dept. of State Health Services website: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/braininjury/default.shtm>

Embryological Development by Joanna Schaffhausen: This article available on the internet describes in easy to understand language how the brain develops before birth: <http://www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/embryo-development>

“Brain Wonders” from Zero to Three: This site is designed to provide parents, caregivers and medical professionals with meaningful information about early brain development and how relationships between babies and their parents and caregivers can support intellectual and social-emotional development. Available at <http://www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders/>

New Additions - Books

Beautiful Beginnings: A Developmental Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers. Helen H. Raikes and Jane McCall Whitmer, 2006. Book. (525 R151b 2006 ECI)

Developed by two research consultants for Early Head Start, this extensive curriculum takes a joyful activity-based approach to enhancing the development of infants and toddlers. Included are more than 350 photocopiable, easy-to-use activity sheets, divided into six age ranges between birth to three years, that build on each child's natural strengths and interests, recognize and expand on emerging developments, and encourage progress in areas of concern. This research-supported curriculum helps children progress in eight key areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, intellectual, discovery, social, self-help, and pretend.

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006. Book. (203.6 A512u 2006 ECI)

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a group of related brain-based disorders that affect a child's behavior, social and communication skills. This booklet was written by the American Academy of Pediatrics to answer some common questions about ASD.

New Additions - Videos

Challenging Behaviors: Where Do We Begin - VT0616

Video and CD-ROM color 51 min. 2004 Professional

This 3-hour training workshop is an introduction to the many issues of challenging behavior, including the strong feelings this behavior may evoke in the providers themselves. Possible causes are discussed as part of the effort to see these children in new, positive, and optimistic ways. The workshop notes the power of children's relationships with the adults who care for them and the need for careful observation of the children. Possible strategies are discussed to help early educators build relationships with the children who exhibit challenging behavior.

Learning Through Observation - VT0617

Video color 65 min. 2003 Professional

This video shows five practitioners in the infant and family field interacting with very young children and their families in a range of service settings. The video vignettes, each 10 minutes long, are presented without narration so students, teachers, practitioners, and supervisors can learn through observation. Questions and a filmed discussion among three Zero to Three board members follow each vignette.

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Infant Mental Health Journal - January/February 2006

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