Brain Development a Lifelong Project
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NMAIMH competencies addressed

Theoretical Foundations:
• Infant/very young child development & behavior

Direct Services Skills:
• Observation & listening

Working with Others:
• Building & maintaining relationships
• Supporting other/mentoring

Reflection:
• Curiosity

Developing of the brain starts as early as three weeks of conception. It is a lifelong process where the brain will continue to develop, store any new information, and retain memories. Both a child’s brain and adult’s brain have the ability to restructure and be flexible, which is also known as neuroplasticity. It is when the brain has the capability to be bendable and be able to alter the relations in experiences, learning, or even after an injury. It allows the opportunity for nerve cells within the brain to compensate from trauma and alter to new circumstances or variations in their environment. For example, if one part of the brain is injured, then the other side of the brain may restructure by reforming new connections and taking over some of its other functions, (Neuroplasticity, 2018). The only difference from a child’s brain to an adult’s brain it is the matter of degree, which is a child’s brain, is much more susceptible than adult’s brain. The good news is that a child is more open for learning and enriching influences. The negative portion of this is that a child’s brain may be more predisposed to developmental delays if their environment is un-nurturing or impoverished, (ZERO TO THREE, 2018).
Parents and caregivers can continue to support their child’s brain growth and continue to enrich a young child’s development by watching and listening how their child communicates. It gives a parent/caregiver an opportunity to learn what their child is feeling and thinking. In supporting of their thinking skills, parents/caregivers could follow their child’s interest. Children tend to learn best through activities that interest them the most. When it comes to self-control parents/caregivers can stay calm when their child is upset. This approach will help their child feel safe and help them get back in control. For self-confidence, parents/caregivers can help their child become a good problem solver by offering enough support to help their child without resolving the problem for them, (ZERO TO THREE, 2018).

Questions for the Home Visitor to encourage discussion and reflection with the Parent/Caregiver...

- What are some of your child’s interest?
- How do you respond to your child when he or she communicates with you?
- How you support your child when he or she is upset?
- What do you do to help your child problem solve?

References/Additional Resources

