

The First 1000 Days of Your Child's Life: A Vital Foundation

The UK Government, and all early childhood professional practitioners, recognises the critical importance of the first 1000 days of a child's life, spanning from conception to the age of two. This period lays the foundation for a child's lifelong health, well-being, and development.

Key Messages – **WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A PARENT**

- 1. Prenatal Health:** Proper prenatal care and a healthy lifestyle during pregnancy are essential for your child's well-being. If you are expecting then you should consult healthcare professionals for guidance.
- 2. Early Nutrition:** Breastfeeding is recommended as the best source of nutrition for infants. If breastfeeding isn't possible, suitable formula milk should be chosen with medical advice.
- 3. Responsive Parenting:** Building strong parent-child bonds through responsive, nurturing care is crucial. Regularly interacting with and meeting the emotional needs of your child positively impacts their development.
- 4. Early Learning:** Babies and toddlers learn through play and exploration. Providing a stimulating environment, talking, reading, and singing to your child enhances their cognitive and social development.
- 5. Emotional Well-being:** Pay attention to your child's emotional well-being. Seek support if you're concerned about their behaviour or mental health. At Nursery, we can pick up any signs very quickly. We have in-house qualified expertise if you have any questions or concerns.
- 6. Nutrition and Healthy Eating:** We introduce a variety of nutritious foods to your child's diet, promoting a balanced and healthy eating habit from an early age.
- 7. Vaccination:** Please ensure your child receives all recommended vaccinations to protect against preventable diseases.
- 8. Safe Environment:** It's ideal to create a safe home environment, free from hazards, to prevent accidents and injuries. Try to envisage your home space from their point of view.
- 9. Regular Check-ups:** Attend all scheduled health check-ups and screenings for your child, as they are essential for monitoring growth and development.
- 10. Parental Support:** Access available support services, such as parenting classes and community resources, to help navigate the challenges of early parenthood. We have a list of these support communities available in Southampton here at the Nursery.

Investing in your child's first 1000 days is a beautiful and completely worthwhile investment in their future. By following these guidelines and seeking support when needed, you can provide your child with a strong foundation for a happy, healthy, and successful life.



WHAT WE AS A NURSERY CAN DO FOR YOU WITH REGARD TO THE FIRST 1000 DAYS

Tiny Toes Day Nursery can highlight and emphasise several specific key points to parents about the benefits of enrolling their child in a professional nursery, particularly in the context of the first 1000 days of their life, which are crucial for cognitive development, behaviour formation, and long-term well-being.

- 1. Early Brain Development:** The first 1000 days are a critical period for brain development. Tiny Toes provides a stimulating environment with age-appropriate activities and interactions that promote neural connections, setting the stage for future learning and cognitive abilities.
- 2. Socialisation:** Early socialisation is vital. In our nursery, children have opportunities to interact with peers, which helps them develop important social and emotional skills like sharing, communication, empathy, and cooperation.
- 3. Structured Learning:** There are many structured learning opportunities at our nursery. Age-appropriate educational activities and exposure to a variety of experiences support language development, problem-solving skills, and a love for learning.
- 4. Professional Care:** Qualifications, experience and expertise of nursery staff in early childhood education are vital, as well as a caring, loving attitude. Tiny Toes' professionals can identify and address developmental milestones and provide individualised support for each child.
- 5. Consistency and Routine:** Nurseries need to provide a consistent daily routine that helps children feel secure and confident. This predictability can positively influence behaviour and emotional well-being.
- 6. Language Development:** We cannot stress enough the importance of early language exposure and development. Tiny Toes encourages language-rich environments through storytelling, reading, and conversations, which are crucial for communication skills and literacy. Other languages are also encouraged.
- 7. Independence:** It's vital to promote independence and self-help skills. Children learn to feed themselves, wipe their own nose, use the toilet, and dress independently etc, fostering a sense of autonomy and confidence.
- 8. Healthy Eating Habits:** We typically offer nutritious, fresh, home cooked meals and snacks, teaching children about healthy eating choices from an early age.
- 9. Physical Activity:** Please don't underestimate the importance of physical activity and outdoor play. Tiny Toes has large outside play spaces and gardens to provide safe spaces for children to engage in physical play, supporting gross motor development and overall well-being.
- 10. Emotional Regulation:** Nurseries help children learn to manage their emotions and build resilience through positive guidance and emotional support. Our loving staff are professionally trained for this support.
- 11. Parental Support:** Our experienced Managers and Senior Team are a valuable resource for parents, offering advice, workshops, and support to help them navigate the challenges of parenthood during these crucial early years. There is also a box of tissues permanently in the Managers office! We have probably seen all manner of issues with the 1,500 parents we have seen through this period in Tiny Toes' 8 years of operations.
- 12. Preparation for School:** A nursery experience prepares children for the transition to school, both academically and socially, giving them a strong foundation for future learning.
- 13. Monitoring and Feedback:** We regularly monitor and share feedback on children's progress and milestones, usually on our management software (FAMILY) ensuring parents stay informed and involved in their child's development. Individual progress is discussed with you personally if required.
- 14. Long-Term Benefits:** There is much professional educational research to show the positive long-term effects of early education and quality childcare on future academic success, behaviour, and social skills. What happens NOW matters. Positive early skills and a loving environment for your child will lead to far better outcomes.
- 15. Safe and Secure Environment:** We prioritise the safety and security of our young children, providing parents with peace of mind. For example, we have the only 'facial recognition' security entry system in Southampton.

Overall, Tiny Toes are extremely conscious of the benefits of our comprehensive nursery setting and educational programme promoting cognitive development, behaviour formation, and overall well-being during the first 1000 days of your child's life – and beyond, as we look after them until they join primary school.

We would welcome any questions you may have.

