

# Why are the early years important to a child's healthy development?

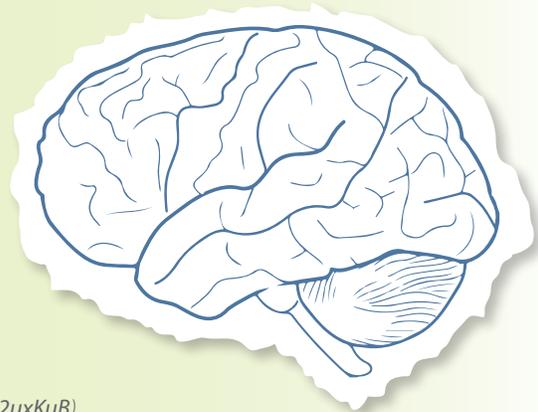
## The evidence

is starting to stack up. It says that a child's **FIRST SIX YEARS** can have a major impact on their personality, **BRAIN**, and **FUTURE** prospects.



The brain is the only organ not fully developed at birth.

(Karen Kearns, [goo.gl/2uxKuB](http://goo.gl/2uxKuB))



During a child's first years, important synapse connections are made that form the **BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE** that the rest of their brain development will rely on.

In fact, evidence suggests:

**90%**

OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN THE **FIRST 6 YEARS** OF A CHILD'S LIFE.

(Arkin, Braveman, Egerter, & Williams, [goo.gl/E7snxM](http://goo.gl/E7snxM))

## Early experiences

impact many aspects of an individual's **DEVELOPMENT**. These are sometimes classified as:

**COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT,**  
*which refers to a child's ability to solve problems and learn*

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT,**  
*which includes the ability to interact with others, to help oneself, and to use self-control*

**SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT,**  
*which means using and understanding language*

**FINE AND GROSS MOTOR SKILLS,**  
*which allow children to use small and large muscles*

(HealthLink BC. Milestones for 5-year-olds. [goo.gl/b9gPqL](http://goo.gl/b9gPqL))

If a child enters kindergarten without a foundation of healthy development, they may struggle to catch up throughout their school years and beyond. **FORTUNATELY, WE CAN ALL HELP** create opportunities for children to grow and learn so that every child starts out with a healthy foundation.



Provincial Office  
for the Early Years