



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**  
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**  
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**  
Program Topic : **Learning Starts Early (LOVE)**

#### **Guidelines to the presenter**

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

#### **Topic:**

Learning starts early

#### **Objectives**

- Revisit the first 1000 days
- Build understanding of why the first 1000 days are important
- Encourage stimulation of early learning from birth to 2
- Highlight adequate nutrition while pregnant and in the first 1000 days

## Introduction

On this show, we celebrate the fact that you are the most important person in your child's life. You have the power to give your child the best possible start in life and it doesn't have to cost you a cent.

Today we revisit the first 1000 days of a child's life because it is so crucial to the rest of the child's life. The first 1000 days of a child's life (which includes the 9 months in the womb) are critical for their later development and achievement. Good nutrition while pregnant, and during the rest of this 1,000 day window can have an enormous impact on a child's ability to grow, learn, and **rise out of poverty**. This is because brain development starts in the womb and develops rapidly from birth to two years old. The brain architecture is set up for life in the first 1000 days. It is important to talk to your child from birth. This supports brain and language development. Talking to your child before they can even speak assists their brain to develop and helps with improving later communication skills.

Questions	Facts/Information
1. <i>What are the first 1000 days?</i>	First 1,000 Days describes the time from the start of pregnancy to a child's second birthday. The first 1000 days of being a parent are now accepted to be the most significant in a child's development. Leading child health experts worldwide agree that care given during the First 1,000 Days has more influence on a child's future than any other time in their life.
2. <i>Why are they important?</i>	The early years are the greatest period of growth in the human brain. Babies are born with 25% of their brains developed; by age three this has rapidly increased to 80%. A child's developmental score at 22 months can serve as an accurate predictor of educational outcome at age 26.
3. <i>What happens if you don't pay attention during these first 1000 days?</i>	This time can permanently affect everything from a child's chances of developing diabetes or having a heart



<p>6. <i>What happens to the brain in these early days of life?</i></p>	<p>deaths, more than any other child survival intervention.</p> <p>Pregnancy and infancy are the most important periods for brain development – the child’s brain is growing faster than at any other time in its life!</p> <p>Mothers and babies need good nutrition to lay the foundation for the child’s future cognitive, motor and social skills, school success and productivity. Children with restricted brain development in early life are at risk for later problems such as, poor school achievement, etc.</p> <p>Brains are built over time, from the bottom up. The basic architecture of the brain is constructed through an ongoing process that begins before birth and continues into adulthood. Early experiences affect the quality of that architecture by establishing either a sturdy or a fragile foundation for all of the learning, health and behavior that follow</p>
<p>7. <i>Is it only food that the baby’s brain needs?</i></p>	<p>No the developing brain needs good nutrition to grow, but is also needs a stimulating environment to develop all the structures for later thinking and learning. Therefore it is really important to talk and sing to babies from when they are born, and to create environments in which they can learn. The more stimulating the early environment, the more a child develops and learns. New experiences for the child build the brain architecture and assist in positive development. Language and cognitive development are especially important during the first six months to three years of life. When children spend their early years in a less stimulating, or less</p>

<p>8. <i>But why do I need to talk to my baby, before it can even talk or even understand?</i></p> <p>9. <i>How can I encourage these skills to develop?</i></p> <p>10. <i>What is serve and return?</i></p> <p>11. <i>So in summary, what can I do to ensure that my child gets the best first 1000 days?</i></p>	<p>emotionally and physically supportive environment, brain development is affected and leads to cognitive, social and behavioural delays</p> <p>Because early speech and language skills are associated with success in developing reading, writing, and interpersonal skills, both later in childhood and later in life. Talking to your child before they can even speak assists their brain to develop and helps with improving later communication skills</p> <p>All through this first year, you can do a lot to encourage your baby's communication skills. And it's easy. All you need do is smile, talk, sing, and read to your baby. One of the most essential experiences in shaping the architecture of the developing brain is "serve and return" interaction between children and significant adults in their lives.</p> <p>This is just like playing a game of tennis – where one person hits a ball and the other hits it back. This is the same thing that happens with babies - Young children naturally reach out for interaction through babbling, facial expressions, and gestures, and adults respond with the same kind of vocalizing and gesturing back at them. This back-and-forth process is fundamental to the wiring of the brain, especially in the earliest years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat well during pregnancy</li> <li>• Breastfeed your child for as long as possible and provide healthy, energy rich complimentary food from 6</li> </ul>
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	<p>months old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to your child from when they are born</li> <li>• Provide stimulating activities for your child</li> <li>• Take your child for regular check ups and growth monitoring at your local clinic</li> </ul>

**Conclusion**

The small things we do today has a big impact on the child in the future. Remember to talk to your child from birth. This supports brain and language development. Talking to your child before they can even speak assists their brain to develop and helps with improving later communication skills.

**Learning outcomes**

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Understand the critical importance of the first 1000 days
- Consider pregnancy practices (avoid alcohol, eat better)
- Spend time stimulating, talking to their children from birth
- Understand that brain development can be compromised through actions in early childhood
- Know the importance of serve and return type interactions