

Your child is born with over 100 billion brain cells that are not connected. One cell can form over 15,000 connections.

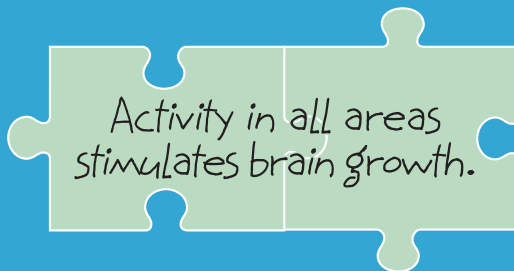
Connections are made and strengthened by repetition and activity. Connections between brain cells form networks.

Networks are formed by interacting and involving your child with the world around him. Networks allow thinking and learning to take place.

Ninety percent (90%) of brain growth occurs from birth to 3 years old! Your child's brain is being "wired" by the world around him from birth to 10 years of age. Connections maintained are powerful and efficient.

Your child's world has 3 basic areas for activity:

- Caring and Sharing (Emotional and Social)
- Moving (Physical)
- Learning (Cognitive)



Activity in all areas stimulates brain growth.

Making the CONNECTIONS

Researched and Developed by members of



Volunteers of America®

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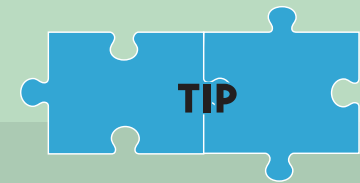
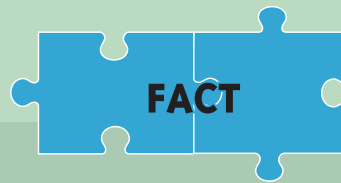
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A Guide to Your
Child's Brain
Development





Caring and Sharing - **EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL**

1. Emotions boost memory.
2. Early interactions affect life-long emotional development.
3. Imitation plays an important role in the development of a child's emotional behavior.

1. Allow your child to express emotions.
2. Help her to understand the source of her feelings. You will find yourself explaining things you never tried to put into words before.
3. Be very mindful and always aware of your own attitude and reaction to people and things. Your child is watching and learning from your behavior.



Moving - **PHYSICAL**

1. Human touch stimulates brain growth.
2. Crawling is critical to development.
3. Touch is the first sense to develop and interacts with all other senses.

1. Stroke and hug your child to comfort him.
2. Get down on the floor with your child and be responsive and reassuring as he discovers new views.
3. Touch and tickle body parts as you name them, "Baby's nose, Mommy's nose!"



Cognitive - **LEARNING**

1. Music is a tool for learning which stimulates math, reasoning and emotional development.
2. Happy babies learn more.
3. Repetition strengthens brain connections.

1. Sing lullabies to your baby. Listen to music while playing.
2. Make silly faces, play peek-a-boo, and encourage laughter.
3. Laugh and play with your child when teaching her new things.