



## What Can We Learn From Babies? Relationships, Resilience and Readiness

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ZERO TO THREE Policy Center





### What We Do





### Our History





### DC: 0-3R Revision

Coming in 2016!



**ZERO TO THREE's Policy Framework**



**Health:**

- Physical Health
- Social & Emotional Health
- Developmental Screening

**Family Strengthening:**

- Basic Needs
- Family Support
- Home Visiting
- Child Welfare
- Paid Family Leave

**Early Learning:**

- Child Care
- Early Head Start
- Early Intervention

**Good Health**

**Strong Families**

**Positive Early Learning Experiences**



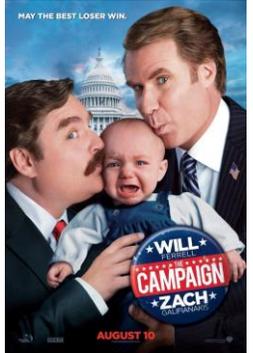
**How does the general public see babies?**




**How Do We See Babies?**




**How Do Policymakers See Babies?**

**How Do Policymakers See Babies?**



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**What is "Infant Mental Health"?**

Infant-toddler social-emotional development is the **developing capacity** of a child to:

- Experience, regulate and express emotions;
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships;
- Explore the environment and learn;

All in the context of **family, community and cultural expectations** for young children.

ZERO TO THREE Infant Mental Health Task Force, in Parlakian and Seibel, 2002.

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**Join Your State Infant Mental Health Association**



<http://aimearlyidaho.org>

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**What can we learn from babies?**



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**Idaho's Babies and Toddlers** 

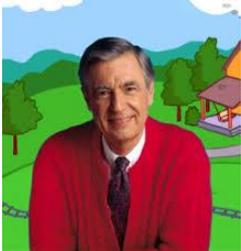
- **6.8% of babies have low birth weight (U.S. is 8.2%)**
- **4% of Idaho babies live in families with parents who are unemployed (U.S. 13%)**
- **55% live in poverty (U.S. 25%)**
- **29% of children who are maltreated are under age 3 (U.S. 27%)**
- **55% of parents or family members read to their 0-5 year olds each day (U.S. 48%)**

**We can learn a lot from babies.** 

1. **Prenatal and early experiences matter for a lifetime.**
2. **Relationships are the catalyst and the context for all early learning.**
3. **Relationships buffer adversity.**
4. **Strong families build strong relationships.**
5. **It's all about relationships.**



**Relationships – Resilience - Readiness** 

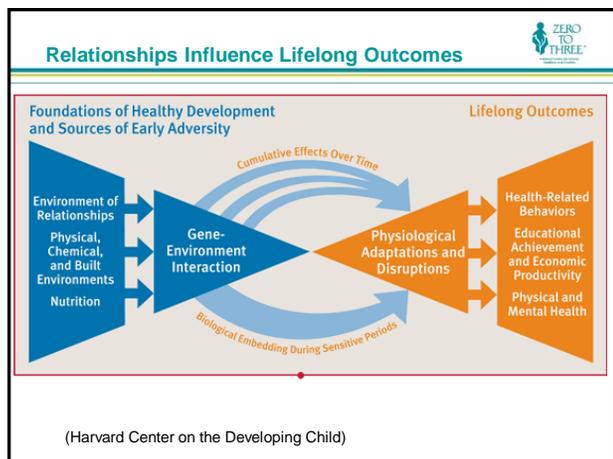


*Mr. Rogers: A relationship is “a small safe place to discover you are lovable and capable of loving in return.”*

**It's All About Relationships** 

*As babies, the way we are held, talked to, and cared for teaches us about who we are and how we are valued.*





### Enduring Influence of Early Experience

**Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)**

- Epidemiological study linking childhood trauma and later life health, mental health and well-being

**Epigenetics**

- The study of heritable changes in gene activity that are not due to changes in DNA.

### Epigenetics

- How genes turn on and off, and whether they are expressed at all, is influenced by early experiences
- The “epigenome” may explain why and how early experience can have lifelong impact

**Familial transmission of traits (vulnerabilities) from parent(s) to offspring can occur through a nongenomic mechanism of inheritance**



**What is trauma?**

*An exceptional experience in which powerful and dangerous stimuli:*

- overwhelms the child’s developmental and regulatory capacity (including the capacity to regulate emotions)

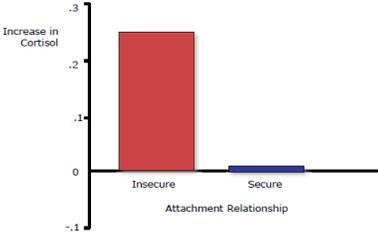
and

- the child has Insufficient resources to cope with the event.



**Stress and Cortisol**

**Secure Relationships Calm Children’s Stress Hormone Response**



Attachment Relationship	Increase in Cortisol
Insecure	~0.25
Secure	~0.01

Source: Nachmias et al. (1996)



**Relationships - Resilience - Readiness**



**Relationships are Essential to Resilience**



**Strong Families = Resilient and “Ready”**



### Adversity Affects Caregivers



### The Resilient Adult: Taking Care of Ourselves



CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH. BEST PRACTICES. RELEVANT POLICY.



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### Relationships – Resilience - Readiness

**Learning –  
and Readiness for School Success –  
Begins at Birth**



**Relationships – Resilience - Readiness**

*And continues throughout life . . .*



**Readiness for School Success**

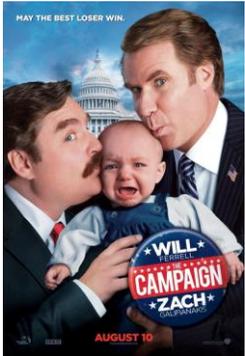
- Self-confidence
- Curiosity and motivation
- Self-regulation
- Persistence
- Empathy
- Optimism
- Resilience



**The Big Question**

***How Can Policies  
and Practices Support  
Relationships  
Resilience, and Readiness?***

**How Do Policymakers See Babies?**



**The Big Question**

**Turn and Talk:**  
*What Policies  
and Practices Support  
Relationships  
Resilience, and Readiness?*



**The Power of ONESie for Paid Family Leave**



**Beyond the Word Gap**



[www.beyondthewordgap.org](http://www.beyondthewordgap.org)



**The School-Ready Child Infographic**



**Now available as a poster!**



### Parenting Resources

**NEW!** From ZERO TO THREE



**LET'S PLAY!**  
Let's Play! is a free parenting app from ZERO TO THREE with fun activities designed by our staff and outside, for parents to use to support their young child's early learning.  
Available on the App Store and the Google Play Store.  
Download your app today!  
**FREE**

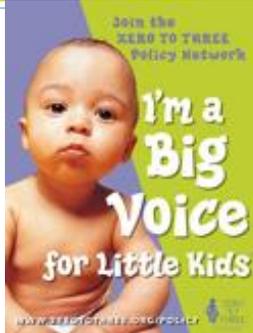
With Let's Play! you can:

- ✓ Choose fun activities that promote early learning for children from birth to 5
- ✓ Take photos to remember
- ✓ Share the activities

Made possible through a grant from Motorola Mobility Foundation.  
Visit: [www.zerotothree.org/tips-for-play](http://www.zerotothree.org/tips-for-play) for more information



### Join the ZERO TO THREE Policy Network



Join the ZERO TO THREE Policy Network  
**I'm a Big Voice for Little Kids**  
[www.zerotothree.org/policy](http://www.zerotothree.org/policy)

<http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/action-center/>

### We can learn a lot from babies.

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### Babies Need All of Us



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