

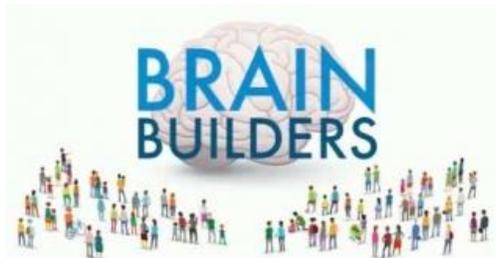


Play • Grow • Connect • Shine
FOOTHILLS CHILDREN'S WELLNESS NETWORK

The Brain Story for Families

Watch these short videos at foothillsnetwork.ca, brainstory.org or click the links below

How Brains are built: The Core Story of Brain Development



The Brain Story is about how brains are built during the early years of life. It is **very important** to our understanding of why some people succeed and others struggle with both physical and mental health problems, including addiction. Everybody should know something about brain development.

<http://www.brainstory.org/#modal-brains-built>

Brain Architecture: Early experiences build brains



The experiences we have in the first years of our lives affects the physical architecture of the developing brain. Just as a house needs a sturdy foundation to support the walls and the roof, a brain needs a good base to support all future development. Exposing children to positive, nurturing interactions are the bricks that build sturdy brain architecture, leading to improved learning, behavior and lifelong health.

<http://www.brainstory.org/#modal-brain-architecture>

Serve And Return: Positive experiences build strong brain architecture



The interactive "serve and return" between a child and a caregiver - cooing, talking, sharing a toy, making facial expressions, or babbling back and forth - literally builds the architecture of the developing brain. These interactions exchanged throughout a young person's early years are the bricks that build a healthy foundation for all future development.

<http://www.brainstory.org/#modal-serve-and-return>

Executive Function: The “air traffic control centre” of the brain



Strong brain architecture supports the development of cognitive, social and emotional skills called “executive function” which operates like “air traffic control” in a child’s mental air space. A young child faces similar challenges learning to pay attention, plan ahead, deal with conflicts, or follow rules at home, in the classroom or in the community. Children require strong executive function to help regulate the flow of information,

prioritize tasks and find ways to manage stress. These “executive function” skills can be developed through practice and coaching throughout childhood and into early adulthood.

[http:// www.brainstory.org/#modal-executive-function](http://www.brainstory.org/#modal-executive-function)

Stress: A force that strengthens or weakens brain architecture



Stress is one of the forces that shapes brain architecture in a developing child. Not all stress is bad. Whether it strengthens or weakens brain architecture has to do with the type of stress, it’s intensity and duration, and whether supportive caregivers are present in the child’s life to help nurture and teach coping skills.

<http://www.brainstory.org/#modal-toxic-stress>

BUILDING BRAINS IS GROUP WORK

Strong brains are built by supportive relationships. That means it’s up to Moms, Dads, Grandparents, families, daycares, schools, community groups — heck, building brains is up to all of us.



The Early Years are Important Years!

www.foothillsnetwork.ca