

Teaching and Learning

Under 2's – 1001 Critical Days



Question: What is 1001 Critical Days?

Answer:

1001 critical days refers to the most crucial time in a child's life for their development, from conception to the age of 2. By the age of two a child's brain is already 80% developed. Aswell as parents and caregivers, everything we do as practitioners is helping to support a child's emotional wellbeing and brain development. The principles of the first 1,001 critical days are there to provide the necessary support to families and children giving children the best start.

Giving every child the best start in life is crucial to improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities across the life course and is recognised as a fundamental action in helping our population live healthy, happy lives and supporting individuals to fulfil their potential. It is a key theme of the Leicester City Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

TASK 1

Click on the link and spend some time exploring the document and reflect on the key principles.

[The best start for life a vision for the 1001 critical days.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/The_best_start_for_life_a_vision_for_the_1001_critical_days.pdf)

Next, consider the following questions:

- How could you develop the support you offer to families in understanding the importance of the 1001 critical days and the impact it has on a child's future?
- How could you further promote parents/carers to foster secure attachments with their children? And what strategies would you use?
- How do you support the mental health of children and their families during this time?
- How do you identify infants and families who may benefit from early support and interventions?
- Do you collaborate with other professionals when supporting vulnerable families? If so, who?
- How does your practice and environment support all areas of a child's holistic development during their first 1001 critical days?

- How do you build strong parent/carer relationships with parents/carers to support their child's development?
- Consider the link between (Adverse Childhood experiences) ACES and the 1001 critical days.
- Why is our role so important in helping prevent or mitigate the impact of ACES and lifelong impact for the children in your care?

TASK 2

Watch this short video, although this is specifically targeted to childcare professionals in Dudley, the key messages are relevant to the childcare workforce across the UK:

[The first 1001 days - YouTube](#)

Refer to the list below and discuss how you can further support children and their families during this crucial time during a child's development. This is not an exhaustive list, but it does include some key aspects for you to consider and reflect on. You may find it useful to explore the links and resources at the end of the Q card to support you with this task:

- Good physical health
- Cognitive and emotional stimulation
- Stress management in babies and toddlers.
- Secure attachments
- Responsive care giving.

- Nutrition
- Immunisations and health checks
- Social skills
- Cognitive & linguistic capacities.
- Early identification of developmental delays
- Parent educating
- Mental health support
- Safe and nurturing environment
- Home safety – Stable environment
- Access to services
- Building social networks
- Respect for diversity.
- Inclusivity

“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual, and emotional – are set in place during pregnancy and in early childhood. Early years have a lifelong effect on health and wellbeing, educational achievement, and economic status.”

(Public Health 2010)

What support it out there?

[Early help \(leicester.gov.uk\)](http://leicester.gov.uk)

[Home \(headsupleicester.org.uk\)](http://headsupleicester.org.uk)

www.healthforunder5s.co.uk

[Chat health](#) for parents.

Healthy Together Helpline: 07520 615 381

[Live Well Little Ones](#) animations (in English and other community languages)

[Leicester Mamas support pregnant and new mothers and their families.](#)

[HOME | babybasics \(babybasicsleicester.co.uk\)](#)

[Family Hub](#)

[Best Start for Life Antenatal Health and Wellbeing Contact - Leicestershire | Health for Under5s](#)

Useful links and Q cards

[PowerPoint Presentation \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)

[First 1001 Critical Days - Cover.pdf \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)

[Early Moments Matter | UNICEF](#)

[The first 1001 critical days – promoting your baby’s development | Pregnancy | Health for Under 5s](#)

[A Start for Life: The first 1001 days | early years alliance \(eyalliance.org.uk\)](#)

[Stress in babies: How to keep babies calm, happy, and healthy \(parentingscience.com\)](#)

Related Q cards:

[Adverse childhood experiences \(leicester.gov.uk\)](#)