

Brain Development Babies and Teens

Your child's body grows better when you give your child good food.

Your child's brain develops better when you respond, cuddle, relax, play and talk with them every day.

Every experience that your baby has shapes their brain, and the most important thing in your baby's life is you!

Did you know.....in the first year of life, your baby's brain doubles in size

Did you know by their first birthday, their brain is two thirds the size of an adult brain

Did you know.....in the first three years of life, their brain is growing and changing faster than it ever will again

Did you know....the second period of rapid brain growth is your child's teenage years. This helps to explain why for some families, this is a particularly challenging time!

Baby Brain

All babies are born with an underdeveloped brain.

Of course the basics are there - controlling breathing, heart, ability to suck, cry and other bodily functions.

Everything else has to be learned - that's where you come in!

Here in Solihull we recommend that parents do the following five things each day to help to grow and develop their baby's brain

respond, cuddle, relax, play and talk with them.

Please follow this link for ideas and activities that you can do with your baby around these five basic building blocks: - [Five to Thrive](#)



Notice...

♥ **'Look away'** – how your baby 'looks away' during an interaction with you. This 'look away' may only last a second, they are not disengaging with you, it is during this time that your baby's brain is processing what they have just experienced, connections in their brain will be growing, reinforcing and developing

♥ Young babies will follow close **movement with their eyes**. This is an involuntary reflex. As their brain develops and connections grow, they will be able to choose where they look!

♥ Even new born babies will try to copy basic facial movements. For instance if you pull your tongue out, they will too! Babies' brains are wired to start to learn from the moment they are born

Teenage Brain

Our brains continue to develop well into our late teens and beyond. The area of the brain that controls reasoning, and helps us think before we act, is still changing and maturing well into adulthood.

When we think of some of our teen's behaviours and challenges, this really helps to explain things!

There is a lot more information about baby and teen brain development as well as useful information for teens here:

<https://solihullapproachparenting.com/free-downloads/>

For further information about the parenting support available in Solihull, please contact the Parenting Team via email to bsmhft.parenting@nhs.net