

## "Uppie Me:" Enhancing Brain Development and Emotional Intelligence in Young Children



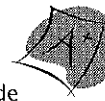
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## Learning Objectives



- Raise overall skill levels and upgrade expertise
- Recognize developmental milestones and temperament
- Understand emotional intelligence
- Gain a working knowledge of how young children flourish socially and emotionally
- Recognize how to build a more responsive and enriched environment that enhances emotional intelligence

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## Brain Research

Early childhood experiences are critical to the developing brain.



The brain develops rapidly in the earliest years of life.

The environment in which the brain develops can either support or inhibit a child's emotional, social, and intellectual development and directly impacts the way the brain develops.

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## Factors that Affect the Brain Negatively

- Environmental Toxins
- Infection
- Malnutrition
- Prenatal Exposure to Drugs
- Premature Birth
- Chronic Stress

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## Factors that Affect the Brain Positively

- ▶ Environments (school and home) that are:
  - Healthy
  - Loving
  - Stimulating
- ▶ Improved conditions for children who suffer abuse and neglect
- ▶ Providing Early Intervention for children with sensory impairments and developmental delays.

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## Developmental Milestones of Social/Emotional Development

- 0-2 Increasingly alert to sights/sounds. Follows you with eager eyes. Smiles at expressions. Will engage, disengage, then reengage for short periods.
- 2-3 Pretend play with others. Enlists your help. Use words/gestures to express feelings. Communicates a desire for closeness. Develops ability to recover from anger.

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## Developmentally Essential Trusted Adult-Child Experiences

1. Encouragement of Exploration (gather information about their environments; develop and pursue interests)
2. Mentoring in Basic Skills (labeling, sorting, sequencing, comparing, and noting means-ends relationships)
3. Celebration of Developmental Advances (celebrate/reinforce accomplishments)

## More Essential Experiences

4. Guided Rehearsal and Extension of New Skills  
(rehearse then elaborate upon new skills)
5. Protection from Inappropriate Disapproval, Teasing, or Punishment (remember trial-and-error learning, mistakes with new learning, and unintended consequences of curious exploration or information seeking)
6. A Rich and Responsive Language Environment

Ramey & Ramey, 1992

## What is Emotional Intelligence?



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## What is Temperament?

The innate behavior style of an individual that seems to be biologically determined. It is made up of in-born traits that organize the child's approach to the world.

~~~~~The Temperament Continuum~~~~~  
Easy Ellen                      In-Between Irma                      Difficult Danny

Personality is determined by the interaction of temperament traits with the environment.

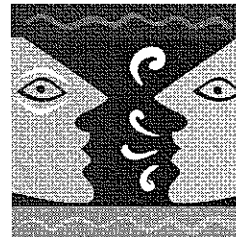
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## The 9 Temperament Traits

1. Activity Level
2. Distractibility
3. Intensity
4. Regularity
5. Sensory Threshold
6. Approach/Withdrawal
7. Adaptability
8. Persistence
9. Mood

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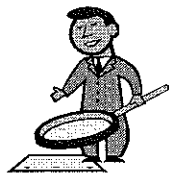
## Let's Make Personal Meaning



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## What does research say about...

- Creativity
- Thinking
- Coping
- Stress Reduction
- Cooperation
- Problem Solving
- Resiliency



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## Creativity



As children grow, they think creatively and express their ideas and feelings visually.

- 0-2 Uses all senses and feelings to interpret the world. Explores new things. Sees things in his own way.
- 2-3 Enjoys scribbling and exploring new materials. Uses creations for fantasies, stories, symbolic play. Develops a sense of spatial relations.
- 4-5 Wants to try new experiences.

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## Thinking



The child's ability to make neural connections with understanding.

- Infant Observing and focusing.
- 1 Symbolic. Substitutes words, gestures and pictures for real things.
  - 2 Has inner world of thought/language.
  - 3 Can make many connections between new and previous experiences. Can sort things and ideas.
  - 4 Increased imagination.

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## Coping



The child's ability to deal with emotions effectively.

- 9 mo. Becomes more anxious about being separated from parents.
- 2-3 Establishes a sense of self. Difficulty accepting limits. Tantrums are normal.
- 4-5 Developing greater self-control.

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## Stress Reduction



The child's ability to recognize and effectively reduce upsetting reactions to their environment.

- Infant Cries. Startles. Flails arms/legs.
- 1 Cries. Pouts. Screams.
  - 2-3 Verbally/physically expresses emotions. May tantrum and fight. Can be taught to self-soothe and relax.
  - 4-5 Can count to 10 to self-calm. Uses logic.

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## Cooperation



The child's ability to interact with others satisfactorily.

- 0-2 Looks at other babies. Loves company of other children. Laughs at antics of siblings.
- 2-3 Can play with others, enjoying simple games. Becomes possessive. Increasingly converse with other children. Needs much social experience.
- 4-5 Enjoys activities with others.

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## Problem Solving

The ability to find solutions.

- 0-2 Test limits of body and abilities.  
Experiment through senses.  
Explore cause/effect.
- 2-3 Create new/unexpected uses for toys  
and materials.  
Experiment with same problem over and  
over again.  
Test physical skills.
- 4-5 Makes plans, completes tasks, suggests  
ways  
to solve conflicts.



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## Resiliency



The capacity to mobilize your  
resources and adapt in the face  
of adversity.

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## Working with Parents

- › "Coffee with the Teacher" Program  
by Dr. Chickie-Wolfe



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## References

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