

# THE FIRST 60 DAYS

The Most Influential Days of  
Infant Brain Development

Un-Learning 22 Myths

Because Neuro-Nurturing a newborn is THE optimal  
start to thriving in life.



NEURO-NURTURING

NEURO-NURTURING®  
MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

DEBORAH MCNELIS, M.ED

# Foreward

It is a true honor to be asked to write the foreword for this incredible booklet. It is filled with wisdom and encouragement. It offers both new parents and professionals an accessible glimpse into the world of development and neuroscience. As an Infant-Parent Mental Health Fellow, I believe this resource is exactly what every parent and professional working with young children should receive as a gift. I am confident the information provided in this booklet has the potential to significantly influence the trajectory of an infant's life.

Deborah McNelis has spent her entire career striving to bring clear, user friendly evidence and guidance to families of young children. Infants' brains are rapidly developing and are being built based on the experiences the child has.

This booklet offers a non-judgmental primer to help anyone spending time with babies to offer the very best opportunity for healthy and loving mental wellness development to occur.



Jan Ference, BEd, MS, IPMHF



# You Are Extremely Fortunate

Lovingly welcoming a baby at this time gives you an advantage previous generations didn't have. In recent decades invaluable research has demonstrated that the earliest days of life have an incredible influence on well-being throughout life. Far too frequently detrimental myths about what to do with babies are shared with new parents. Now instead, you will benefit from the reassuring knowledge of what babies actually DO need. Science proves that timely, consistent nurturing is a biological requirement. So, your baby can hugely benefit from nurturing the heart of who they are while avoiding over developing their response to stress.

Responsive nurturing of course continues to be needed as your baby grows, but it is found to be fundamental in the first two months. In committing to the physical and mental health development of your baby, with this understanding, you will feel assurance in Neuro-Nurturing® your newborn during the first 60 days.

This simple booklet shares insights from a baby on what they want (and need) the adults in their life to know. Then provided for you is a Neuro-Nurturing® Knowledge explanation that is based on proven research. One of the most common comments I receive is, "I wish I knew this when my children were young." Now you will not have that regret. With the 22 nuggets of knowledge included here, you will not miss the wonderful feeling of being more prepared and confident as a Neuro-Nurturing® parent that starts your baby on a path to thriving.

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# Acknowledgement

Extremely significant research now indicates the incredible influence consistent nurturing responsive relationships have specifically in the first two months.

The primary researcher involved in discovering these invaluable findings is Bruce D. Perry, M.D. Ph.D. In the book, "What Happened To You?, Conversations on Trauma, Resilience and Healing", that he co-authored with Oprah Winfrey, Bruce Perry reveals information about the findings stating:

**“If, in the first two months of life, a child experienced high adversity with minimal relational buffering but was then put into a healthier environment for the next twelve years, their outcomes were worse than the outcomes of children who had low adversity and healthy relational connection in the first two months but then spent the next twelve years with high adversity.**

**“Think of that: The child who has only two months of really bad experiences does worse than the child with almost twelve years of bad experiences, all because of the timing of the experiences.” - Bruce D.Perry, M.D. Ph.D**

It is essential and ultimately beneficial to all of us that this impressive and critically important understanding becomes not only common knowledge, but that the nurturing babies require and the needed support of parents and caregivers is provided.

Because of the work Dr. Bruce Perry and his colleagues have done, you have the extraordinary opportunity to have an incredibly positive influence in The First 60 Days!

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# Spoiling

"Repeatedly responding to and picking up a crying baby will spoil them." -Myth

"I am new to this world so I really need you to help me feel secure. While I am a baby, learning that you will consistently meet my needs is one of the most important things you can do for me."



## Neuro-Nurturing Knowledge

### Nurturing<sup>®</sup> responses

to your newborn's needs are absolutely necessary,  
AND is NOT spoiling

Your baby is biologically designed for relationships and infancy has been found to be one of the most critical times for nurturing relationships to have the most positive impact. Consistently responding to the expressed needs of a baby is exactly what a baby requires. The impact of respectful nurturing responsiveness actually is the opposite of spoiling a baby. The security of being near you and having needs met predictably leads to your baby's brain wiring positively for health, learning, behavior, positive self-perception and overall well-being.

# Self Regulation

"If left alone babies will learn to self-regulate."-Myth

"My very immature brain cannot learn to regulate without you. When you are calm and help to calm me, this provides the crucial experience of co-regulation that is essential to my healthiest development."



## Neuro-Nurturing Knowledge

**Your newborn**  
requires your mature brain to help regulate  
their immature brain

Human beings only develop through relationships and do not develop in isolation. The highest functioning area of the brain is the very last to complete development. This means your baby is not at all capable of manipulating or trying to control you. Along with other important abilities needed in life, this last to develop brain area helps to regulate emotions, but only when much more mature. It develops as a result of having numerous repeated calming experiences. When your baby is upset or over-stimulated (dysregulated) and you respond with empathy, respect and nurturing comfort, you are providing the experiences that are absolutely essential for optimal overall development. When you use your calm mature brain to help your baby through times of distress, this is called, co-regulation, and your baby requires it.



Because of the many myths and misconceptions about babies that are still quite common, it is still a minority of adults that have the understanding you now have. So.....

## **Congratulations!**

Stop for a moment and realize how much more you now know about Neuro-Nurturing®your Newborn!



### **Meet the Author**

Deborah McNelis, M.Ed. is very proud to be the founder of Brain Insights with a focus of supporting adults in guiding children to be their true selves beginning at birth.

With an emphasis on nurturing responsive relationships throughout childhood and especially in infancy, for decades it simply has been a true passion of hers to share insights that inspire people toward having a genuinely positive impact in this world.



# Testimonials

"Wow! This is fabulous. It is so concise and clear in a compassionate 'arm around you' way. It is BRILLANT and a desperately needed resource!" -Jane Evans, International Parenting & Childhood Trauma Expert - UK

"This is such a gentle, but empowering asset for those who read it."  
-Gill Connell, Author of A Moving Child is a Learning Child. Trainer - NZ

"I love it! It's so nice to have a guide to help parents nurture their little one's brains during those early days! - Kristin, Physical therapist & Mom of 3 preschoolers -US

"Wow! This is awesome. It is obvious a ton of time and care went into crafting this. There is loads of value here for parents!" - Brandon, Entrepreneur and Dad - US

"As a therapist and mother, I found the teachings of, The First 60 Days, extremely helpful and a great resource. I frequently found that baby books and my training as a therapist would conflict on how to best raise your baby. The First 60 Days, confirmed my instincts and put many of my conflicts at rest." - Sarah Bowman, Psychotherapy Counselor - US

"This is such a great resource for new moms. I love the part that is from the baby's point of view. I really think that will help moms to put what's most important into perspective." - Patrice Payment, LPC, Fonder, Mom Life Counseling, LLC - US

"This is so amazing!" -Tim, Grandfather of 3 - US

"I love this resource. It is so beneficial for first time parents." -Stella Stead, Founder, Above & Beyond Early Childhood Consulting - AU

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# Supporting Scientific Research

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**Neuro-Nurturing® is beneficial at every age!**  
**The brain is always learning, and reorganizing throughout life.**



**It is extremely easy to provide needed positive experiences beyond The First 60 Days and throughout early childhood with the ringed pocket sized books created by Brain Insights.**

# Nurture Yourself Nurture Your Newborn

## Supporting You!

Thanks to the groundbreaking research conducted by Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D., and colleagues which highlights the profound and essential impact of early relationships in the first two months, this booklet has been developed to provide support during this crucial period. By using clear and straightforward language, you will gain a priceless understanding of your own and your baby's needs, while dispelling common myths that often lead to confusion.

Reading *The First 60 Days* will leave you feeling more confident about your ability to positively influence your baby's physical and mental health development.

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