



Your Young Child's Brain: How Does it Develop?

The brain grows and changes a lot during early childhood (0-6 years). As a young child grows, brain connections become stronger. These connections help the brain's different parts communicate with each other and with the rest of the body.

Because there is so much growth in the brain during early childhood, parents and caregivers have an opportunity to influence brain development in positive and negative ways.

saskatchewan
preventioninstitute
our goal is **healthy** children

**1319 Colony Street,
Saskatoon, SK S7N 2Z1
Bus. 306-651-4300
Fax. 306-651-4301
www.skprevention.ca**

RESOURCE 8-701
Updated 05/2026

The Saskatchewan Prevention Institute provides services to all those living on Treaty Lands 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10, and the homeland of the Métis. The Saskatchewan Prevention Institute is dedicated to moving forward on a shared path of reconciliation and partnership. We are all Treaty people.

How can you make a difference in your young child's brain development?

By providing healthy experiences, parents and caregivers help children's brains develop to their best potential. A child's brain develops in a "use-dependent" fashion. This means that early experiences shape the way the brain grows, works, and communicates. The more stimulating and loving experiences a child has, the more these positive experiences support healthy brain development.

How can you help your child's brain develop?

- Love your child no matter what (unconditional love) and build a secure attachment.
- Provide safe, appropriate touch through cuddling, hugging, holding, feeding, and rocking.
- Respond to your child's needs and cues consistently and sensitively.
- Create routines and provide consistent care.
- Provide safe opportunities to explore new experiences and environments, while being a safe haven to return to.
- Support play, learning, calm, and rest based on your child's cues.
- Praise your child specifically for what they do and tell them why it matters.
- Set boundaries and rules, reinforcing them in a calm, kind, and respectful way.
- Encourage play, movement, sounds, and songs.