**Healthy Baby Healthy Brain**

**Generic Articles for Service Providers**

*(516 words – for article)*

**Healthy Baby Healthy Brain Website**

The Best Start Resource Centre has launched a new website for parents: [www.HealthyBabyHealthyBrain.ca](http://www.HealthyBabyHealthyBrain.ca). This website offers parents many suggestions to help them support their baby’s brain development. The website has 15 short videos on topics such as nutrition, sleep, play, literacy, physical activity, attachment, self-regulation, discipline, stress, etc. The website is for future parents and for parents of children aged zero to three.

The videos show real-life situations that were filmed with families from Ontario. In some of the videos, Dr. Jean-Victor Wittenberg, a child psychiatrist, comments on the parent-child interactions. Sylvie Boulet, a registered dietitian, also provides nutrition comments. Throughout the series of videos, the experts offer practical suggestions for parents, based on proven practices.

More information on all the topics covered by the videos is also available on the website and through links to related websites. The website is available in English and French (French URL is [www.BebeEnSanteCerveauEnSante.ca](http://www.BebeEnSanteCerveauEnSante.ca)). All the videos can be shared through online social networks.

The website is organized using the following key messages:

* *“Start early.”* Outlines the importance of prenatal health and of early interaction with babies.
* *“Love builds brains.”* Focuses on attachment, on baby’s needs and on developing self-regulation in young children.
* *“Playing builds brains.”* Provides suggestions of ways to boost baby’s brain with everyday fun and games.
* “*Health builds brains*.” Offers health and wellness tips related to nutrition, physical activity and sleep.
* *“Baby’s world matters.”* Emphasizes the importance of creating good environments through routines, child-proofing and reducing stress for young children.

The website development was based on results from a recent survey of 512 parents in Ontario (details available in the report *Early Brain Development, Parent Knowledge in Ontario*, available at [beststart.org/resources/hlthy\_chld\_dev](http://beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev)). The survey revealed that parents are aware of the importance of the early years. At the same time, parents are not sure which toys and foods they should give their baby to help with brain development. They want to know what activities they should do with their young child. They also want to know about research recommendations, because they are bombarded with persistent ads for children’s products.

The survey also indicated that parents of young children like to learn about parenting using interactive websites. [www.HealthyBabyHealthyBrain.ca](http://www.HealthyBabyHealthyBrain.ca) has been designed with the needs of busy parents in mind. The website is easy to navigate and the videos are fun to watch. Over 60 parents have field-tested the website prior to the October 2012 launch.

Experts were consulted in the development of the website to make sure that the information was based on research. The videos emphasize the importance of attachment and relationships and encourage parents to interact often with their babies, in a positive way. The everyday situations depicted show all of the little things parents do with their baby impact on their development.

The website will be promoted through the Ontario Early Years Centres and through health care providers. Parents have indicated that they receive most of their parenting information through these sources.

This website was developed by the Best Start Resource Centre of Health Nexus, a not-for-profit organization based in Ontario.

*(149 words - for listserv announcements)*

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The videos show real-life situations. Some of the videos include expert commentary on the parent-child interactions. The website also contains links to useful additional resources. All the videos can be shared through online social networks.

The website is built around the following key messages:

* *Start early.*
* *Love builds brains.*
* *Playing builds brains.*
* *Health builds brains.*
* *Baby’s world matters.*

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