



**Health  
Visiting**



**Little Sparks  
Big Starts**



**STARTING IN A FEW MINUTES AT 15:30**

**Little Sparks, Big Starts: how health visiting can  
promote baby brain development**

**23 April 2026**

**#iHVInsights**

[www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)



**Health  
Visiting**



**Little Sparks  
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Little Sparks, Big Starts: how health visiting can promote baby brain development

23 April 2026

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## Make the most of the opportunity



## Enjoy the whole hour



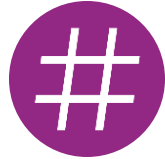
**Ask** - type your questions to the panel as you think of them during the presentations – use the Q&A function:

- **Name of presenter** you would like to answer your question
- Brief **question**
- **Your name** (if you wish to do so)



## Feedback

Participate in the poll or contact us at [events@ihv.org.uk](mailto:events@ihv.org.uk)



## Social media - #iHVInsights



## Continue your CPD:

- Access recording of live session after the event on our website (no recording on other devices is allowed)
- Attendance at this event and engagement with the iHV reflection template will support you with demonstrating CPD activities that align to the 2022 NMC Standards of Proficiency for SCPHN Health Visiting.

The Institute of Health Visiting is a charity and centre of excellence for health visiting. Its core purpose is:  
To improve outcomes for children and families and reduce health inequalities through strengthened health visiting services

# Agenda



## Welcome

- Vicky Gilroy – Director of Innovation and Research, iHV

## Guest Speakers

- Grace Essex – Head of Finance & Operations, Kindred Squared
- Grace Houston – Professional Development Officer Perinatal and Infant Mental Health, iHV
- Leanne Howlett – Parent Panel Representative
- Maria Somers – Professionals' Insights Group Representative

## Q&A with Speakers

## Close and Evaluation



## Grace Essex

Head of Finance & Operations,  
Kindred Squared



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Use the Zoom Q&A function

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**SEEN**

Secondary  
Education  
around  
Early  
Neurodevelopment



**Little Sparks  
Big Starts**

# Early neurodevelopment – why does it matter?

We are learners from birth...



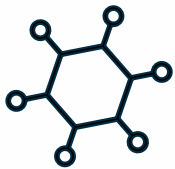
A baby is born with 25% of his/her brain developed. 80% of a child's brain is developed by the age of 3.



It is estimated that by the age of three, 50% of our language is in place. At five, it's 85%.

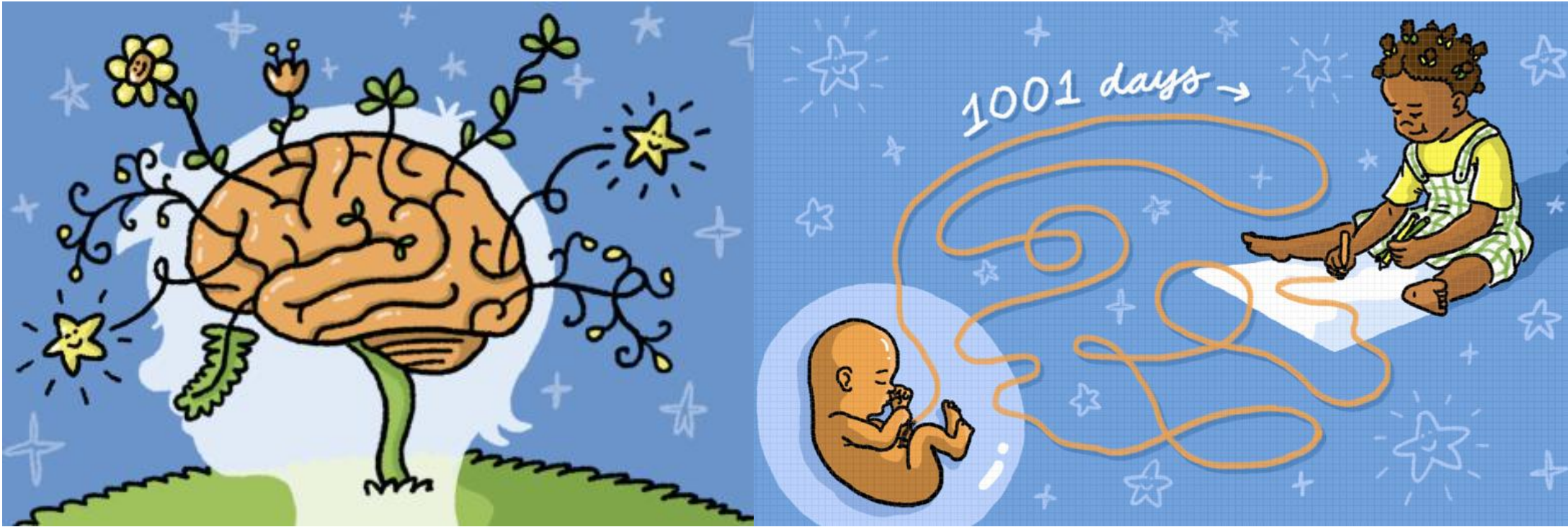


A child's development score at 22 months predicts educational outcomes at 26 years.



Peak development: Over a million new neural connections are formed every second in the first year

What can we do to make sure everyone understands the importance of brain development in the first years of life and the impact of caregiver-infant interactions?





# SEEN

Secondary  
Education  
around  
Early  
Neurodevelopment

# What is the SEEN Programme?

The SEEN Programme (Secondary Education around Early Neurodevelopment) teaches KS2/KS3 students about early brain development and the importance of the caregiver.

The programme includes free lesson plans, teaching resources and staff training, and can be delivered in science, PSHE or in other subjects or school assemblies.

Developed by Oxford University and Academic and Education Advisory Groups and covers 12 Curriculum statements covering three areas:

1. Neuroscience of brain development
2. The influence of experiences provided by caregivers
3. The evidence linking early years to long-term health impacts and the non-deterministic nature of early development.



# SEEN

Secondary  
Education  
around  
Early  
Neurodevelopment

## What is the SEEN Programme?

- Launched by the then HRH Duchess of Cambridge in 2021, the programme was trialled with more than 3,700 students across 29 schools. Since its launch, the programme is estimated to have reached over 25,000 students.
- **100% of teachers** and **91% of pupils** felt the SEEN curriculum should be taught to other pupils of the same age.
- **Young people** think the content is fun, interesting and relevant to them.
- **Teachers** see the opportunity for secondary schools to help future generations enter education 'school ready' at age 5 and agree that it is about time all young people learnt some brain science.

Could the content be adapted to reach a wider audience?



# So, what is next?

<b>Schools</b>	<p><b>KS2 and KS3 lessons</b> (including worksheets, quizzes, presentations and teaching guides)</p> <p><b>KS2 and KS3 assembly packs</b> (including teaching guides)</p>
<b>Parents</b>	<p><b>Guidance for parents</b> broken down into four key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Brain development in the early years</li><li>2. How parents and caregivers impact brain development</li><li>3. How early brain development impact health for life</li><li>4. Positive &amp; Negative Experiences</li></ol>
<b>Health Visitors</b>	<p><b>eLearning modules</b> for health practitioners.</p> <p><b>Parent resources</b> to be used alongside health practitioner interactions.</p>
<b>Early Years Educators</b>	<p>Four <b>lessons for early years practitioners</b>, apprentices and students.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The brain: role, structure and function</li><li>2. Early brain development, epigenetics and stress</li><li>3. Neuroplasticity and resilience</li><li>4. Brain development throughout life: the role of the caregiver</li></ol>



**Can we call  
all of these  
resources  
“SEEN”?**



Little Sparks  
Big Starts



# Little Sparks Big Starts



**Schools**



**Parents**



**Early Years  
Educators**



**Health  
Visiting**



**Schools**





**Parents**





# **Early Years Educators**





**Health  
Visiting**





Little Sparks  
Big Starts

**Launch April 2026**



**Schools**



**Parents**



**Early Years  
Educators**



**Health  
Visiting**

[littlesparks.org.uk/](https://littlesparks.org.uk/)

[grace@kindredsquared.org.uk](mailto:grace@kindredsquared.org.uk)



## Grace Houston

Professional Development  
Officer Perinatal and Infant  
Mental Health, iHV



Type your questions as you  
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presentations

Use the Zoom Q&A function

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# Creating Little Sparks, Big Starts – Health Visiting

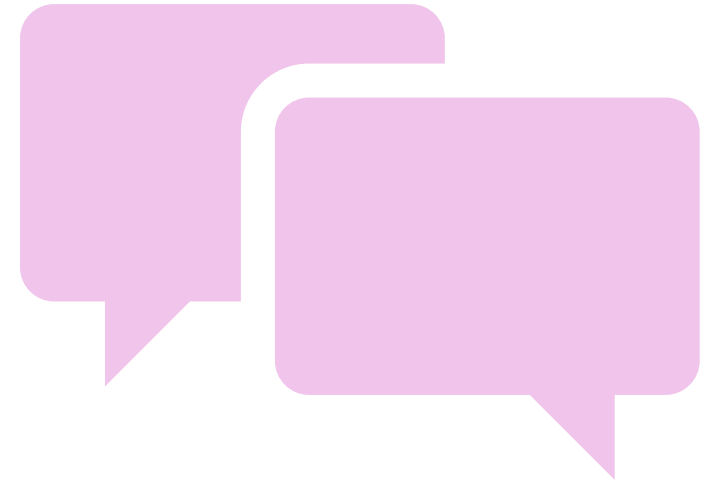
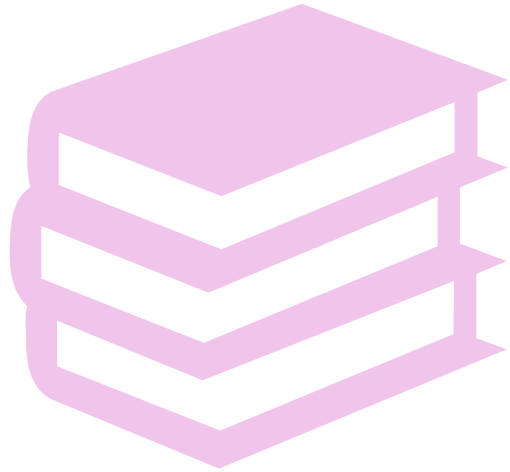
Introducing:




**Leanne Howlett, Parent Panel representative**

**Maria Somers, Professionals' Insights Group representative**

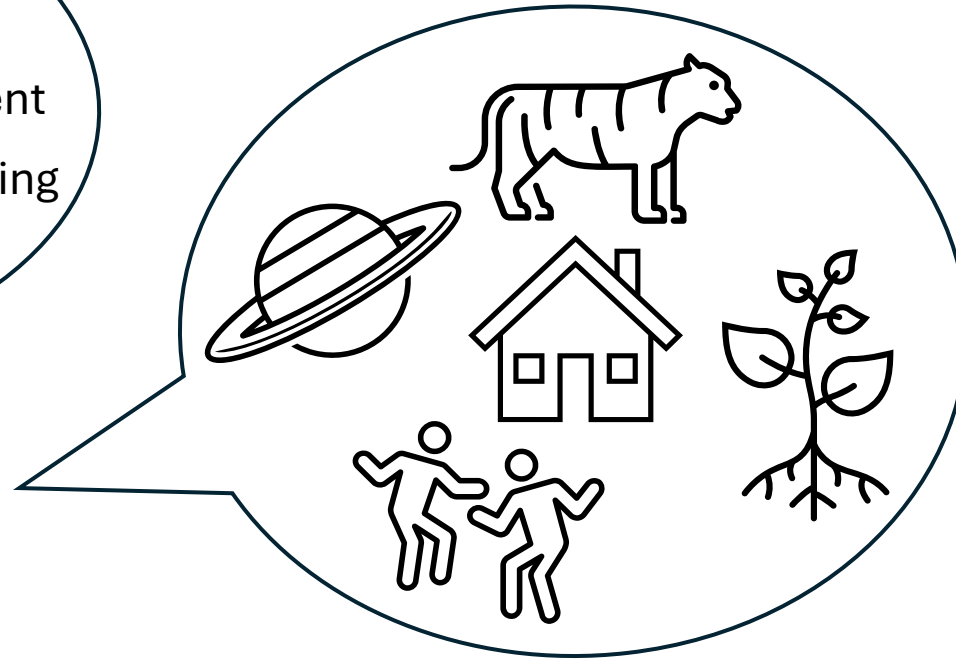
# Scoping and development



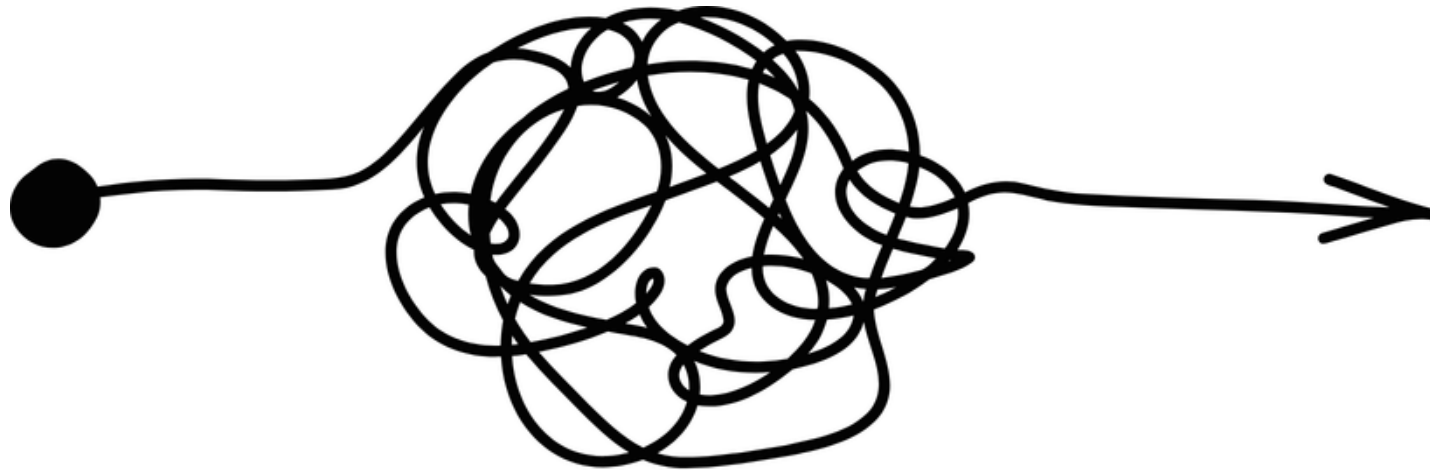
# Health visiting practitioners share key messages in a wide variety of ways



bonding  
serve and return  
reflective functioning  
wiring    synapses    attachment  
baby cues    responsive parenting  
reciprocity  
attunement



# Scoping findings – Framing early brain development



# Scoping findings – Framing early brain development



# Building the LSBS e-learning



# Modules



## 1. How baby brains are built

DURATION: 20 MINS



Start module 1



## 2. Brain-building toolkit

DURATION: 25 MINS



Start module 2



## 3. Theory into practice

DURATION: 10 MINS

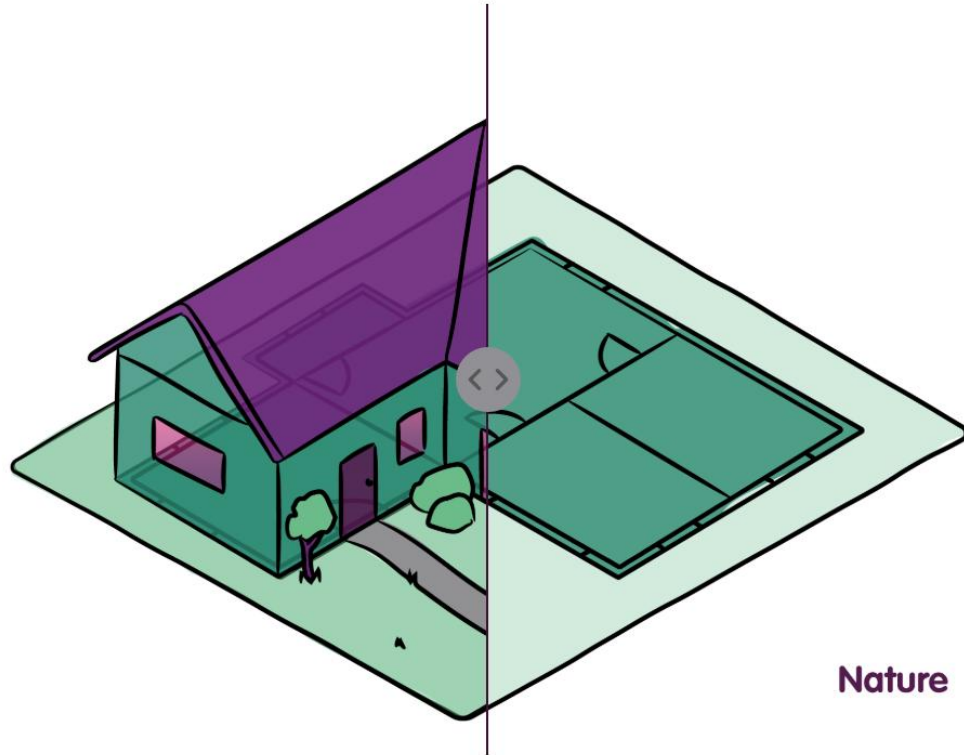


Start module 3



# Module 1 – how baby brains are built

Select the arrows and slide across the image to compare nature and nurture:

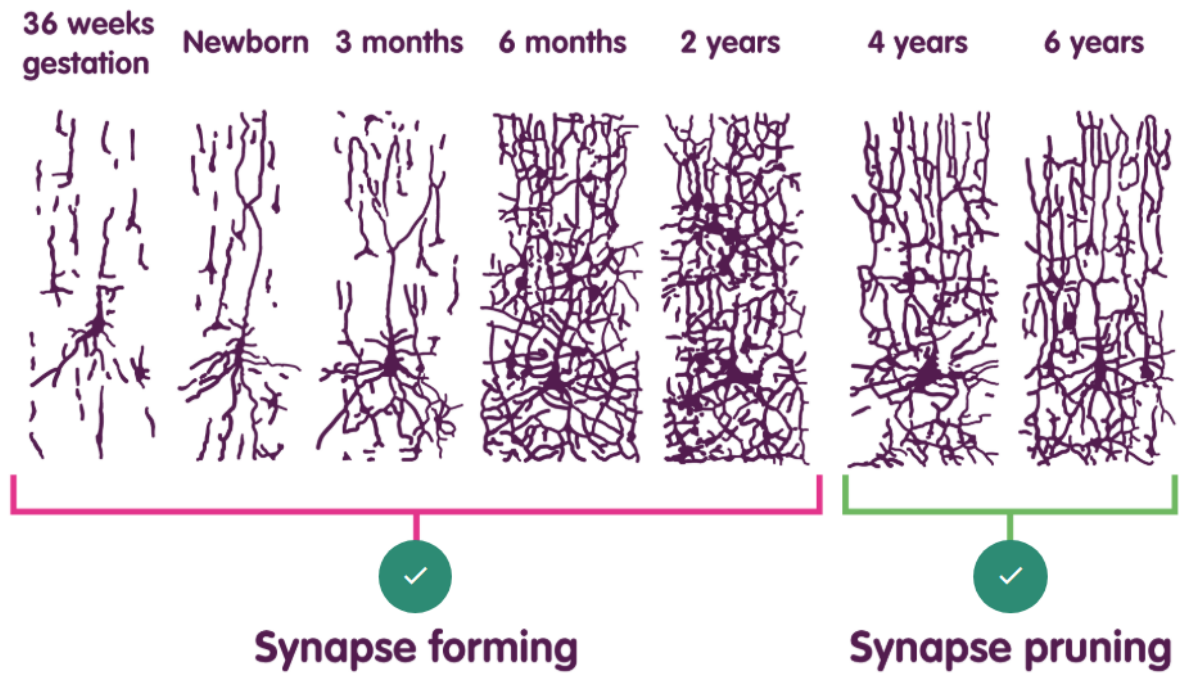


## Smart renovations

Just as we upgrade our home over time, pruning helps remodel the brain to match the next stage of life. Tearing down old structures allows the space for stronger connections to grow.

Pruning is the brain's natural process of decluttering - removing unused or weaker connections to make the remaining ones stronger and more efficient.

Select the hotspots to discover more about the different stages:



# Module 1 – how baby brains are built

## Building an emotionally healthy brain

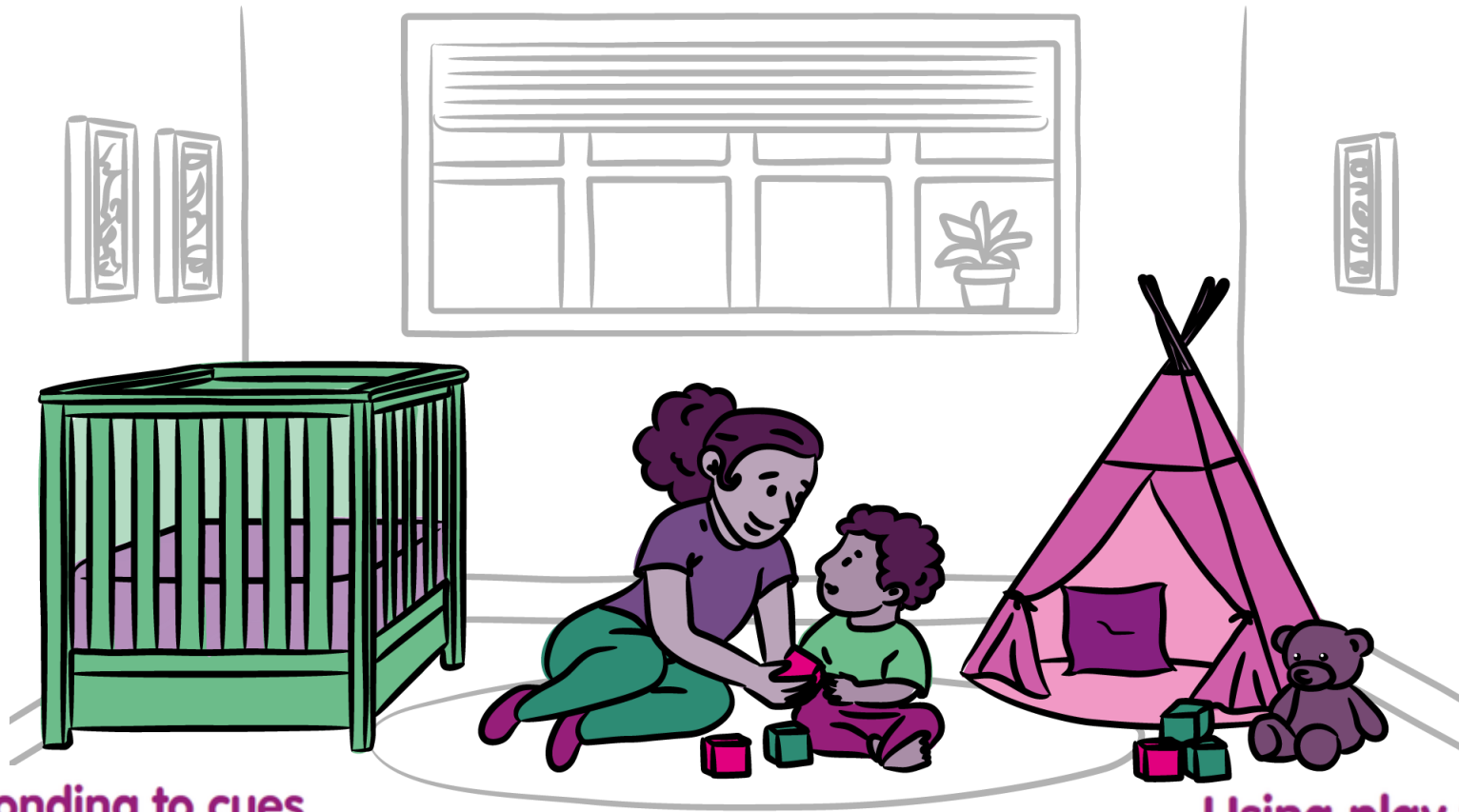
The Centre for Early Childhood's Explainer on growing a healthy brain explains why early relationships, surroundings and experiences are central to children's development and can have lasting effects throughout life.

[Download the guide to growing an emotionally healthy brain \(opens in a new window\)](#)

*Duration: 3 mins 5 secs*



# Module 2 – brain-building toolkit



Noticing and responding to cues

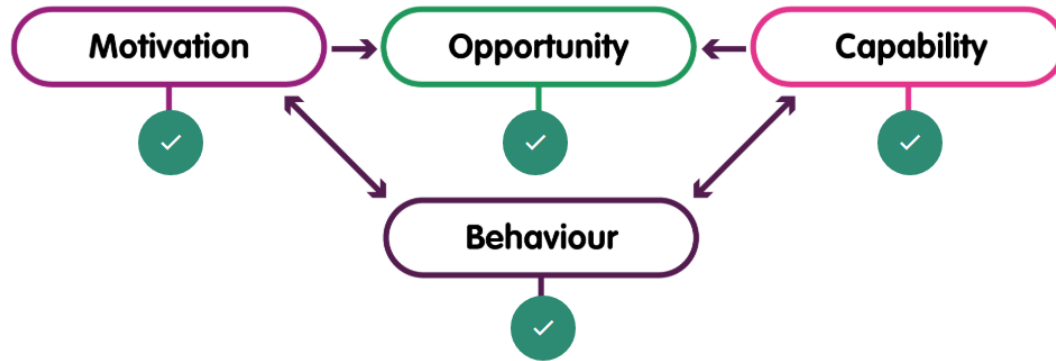
Tuning in

Using play to connect, learn and grow

# Module 3 – theory into practice

## 1. The COM-B model

Select the hotspots to find out more about the COM-B model:



## 2. The Family Partnership Model (FPM)

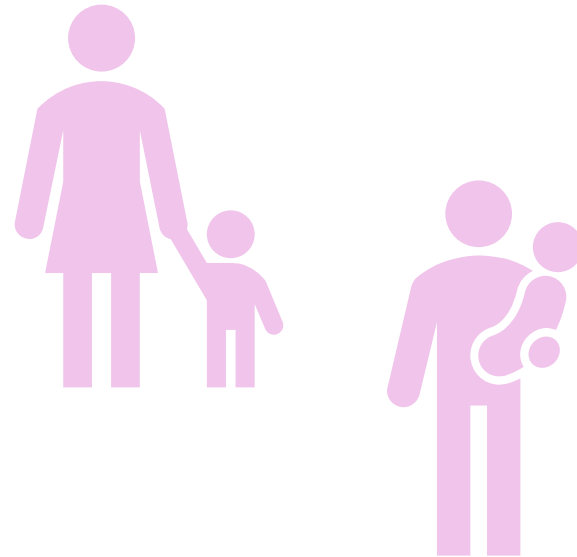
Select the button to work through the slider to explore how the FPM can support successful conversations with parents:

The screenshot shows a digital interface for the Family Partnership Model. On the left, there is a large circular area containing a green illustration of a cooking pot with a green handle. To the right of this area, the text reads: **Combined knowledge**  
Combining ideas, knowledge and opinions of parents and practitioners generates a shared picture and realistic ideas of how baby brain development can be nurtured and supported. Below the text, there are three small circles: the first two are green with checkmarks, and the third is pink with a checkmark. A pink arrow on the left side of the circular area points to the left, indicating a navigation button.

# Module 3 – theory into practice



# Building a parent resource



# Creating the LSBS Parent App

A dark blue banner for the 'Little Sparks, Big Starts' app. At the top left is the iHV logo. To its right are the 'Health Visiting' logo (a purple stylized figure) and the 'Little Sparks Big Starts' logo (a colorful starburst). Below the logos, the title 'Little Sparks, Big Starts' is written in large white font. Underneath the title is a paragraph of white text: 'Discover the everyday moments of connection that build your baby's brain and shape their future health and development'. At the bottom of the banner is a photograph of a man with a beard kissing a baby on the forehead, framed with a purple scalloped border.

iHV

Health Visiting

Little Sparks Big Starts

## Little Sparks, Big Starts

Discover the everyday moments of connection that build your baby's brain and shape their future health and development





Your baby's brain



Your baby's communication



Your baby's feeding



Your baby's sleep




Your baby's crying




Your baby's play



# Your baby's brain

 Your baby's brain grows faster in the first year than at any other time in life

 It's making more than a million connections every second

 Your interactions with your baby are helping to shape their brain



**BRAIN**

00:49

Video player controls: play, progress, volume, settings, full screen, share.

**FEEDING**

00:42

Video player controls: play, progress, volume, settings, full screen, share.

**CRYING**

fameeda Malik  
Community Nursery Nurse

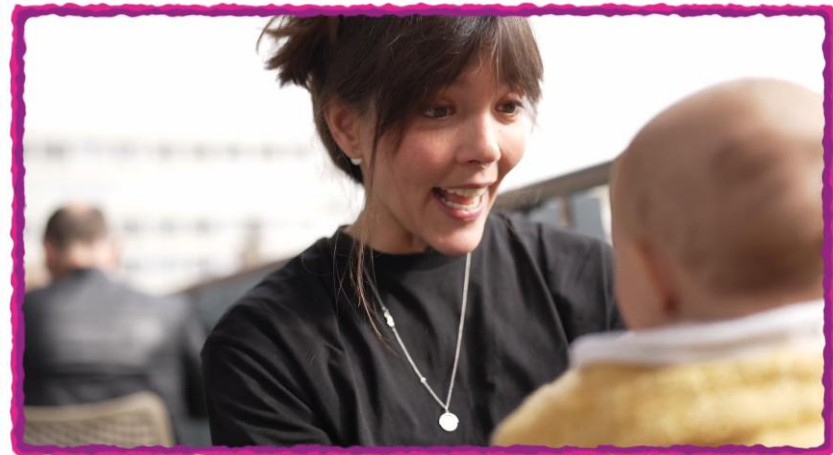
00:41

Video player controls: play, progress, volume, settings, full screen, share.

**SLEEP**

00:51

Video player controls: play, progress, volume, settings, full screen, share.



## Want to know more?

Babies' brains are amazing! They learn and adapt constantly, especially in the early years. That's why your role is so important: when you're simply *being* with your baby, you're helping to build the pathways in their brain.



### The adult they become

See how the way you shape your baby's brain helps shape the adult they will become

[View on Centre for Early Childhood](#)



### Brain connections

Discover how babies develop brain connections even before birth

[View on CBeebies parenting](#)



### Baby's amazing brain

Understand about the incredible development of your baby's brain and what this means for them

[View on Ready to Relate](#)

## Got some more time?

Have a look at these extra resources:



Want to bust the myth of the 'perfect parent'?

[Read article on BBC](#)



How can every child thrive by five?

[Listen to seven-year-old Molly's TED talk](#)



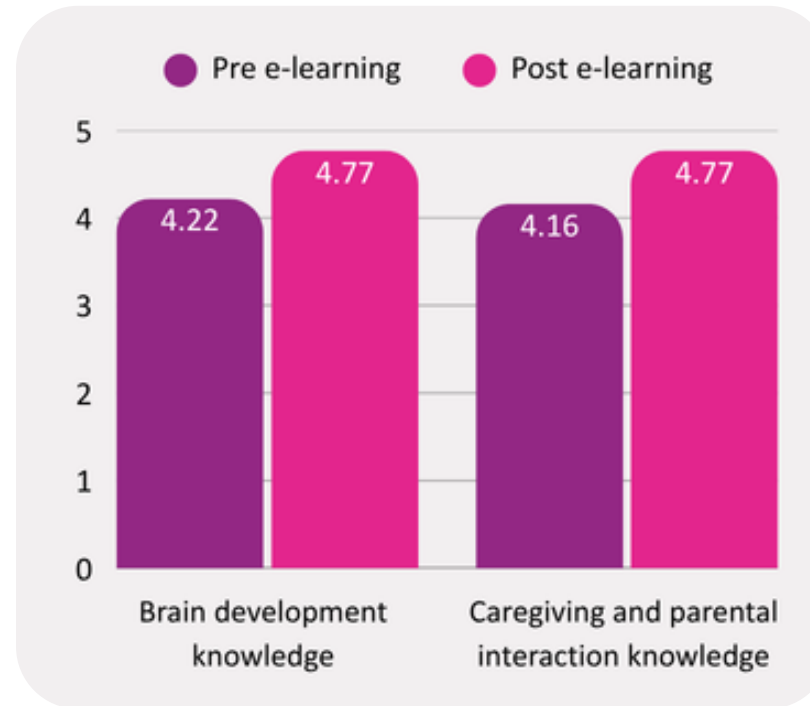
Why is connection in a world of screens more important than ever?

[Read on Centre for Early Childhood](#)

# Evaluating the e-learning

**96%**  
Would  
recommend  
to a colleague

Liked by practitioners



Increased knowledge

**23%**

Increased confidence

# Evaluating the Parent App

**100%**

Learnt new ways to support their baby's brain

Increased parent knowledge

**100%**

Would recommend to family and friends

Liked by parents



*I have got a family who struggle with reading and taking in information. You have to really break down what you're telling them for them to actually understand and retain the information. Those videos are really good for that particular family.*

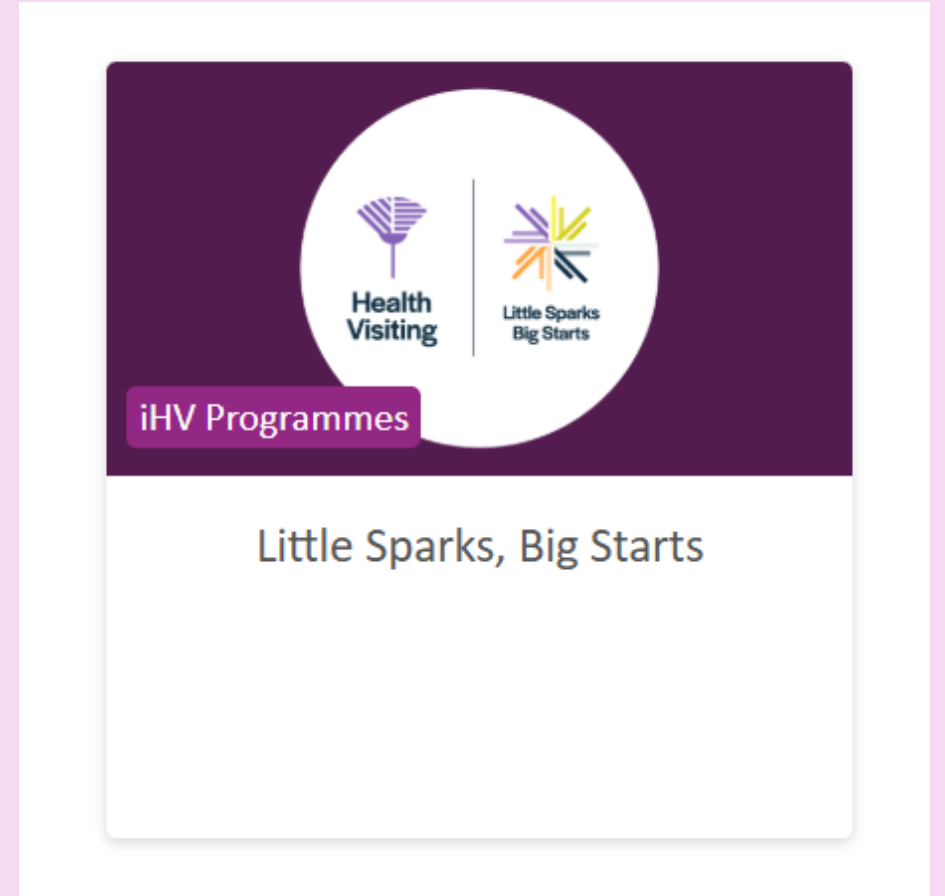
Works well in practice

# Access Little Sparks, Big Starts – Health Visiting

Access Little Sparks, Big Starts – Health Visiting via iHV LEARN



<https://ihv.org.uk/training-and-events/training-programme/little-sparks-big-starts/>





**We will aim to answer as many questions as possible during the live session.**

Use the Zoom Q&A function

- **Name of presenter** you would like to answer your question
- Brief **question**
- **Your name** (if you wish to do so)

# Over to you!



## Help us to tailor our events to meet **your** needs!

- Submit your anonymised responses to the poll
- What more can we do to support you in your practice?
- Email [events@ihv.org.uk](mailto:events@ihv.org.uk) with any suggestions



Join us again! Insights Xtra!



**SPOT**  
**SMA** **SYMPTOMS**  
**MILESTONES**  
**ACTION**



Spot the Signs. Change a Life: The important role of health visiting in early identification of SMA

18 June 2026 – 15:00-16:30

#iHVInsights

[www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

# Future iHV Member Benefit Event Dates



TOPIC	DATE
SCPHN Student Network	14 May 2026
Retired Member Network	21 May 2026
Sp HV PIMH Special Interest Group	9 June 2026
SEND Special Interest Group	25 June 2026

All future dates  
can be found at:  
[bit.ly/4enHn2H](https://bit.ly/4enHn2H)



## Motor Development Ambassadors



11 May

## This Mum Moves Ambassadors



23 Jun

## Genomics Ambassadors



6/13 Jul

## Practice Assessor, Practice Supervisor



8/9/15 Sep

## Safeguarding Supervision Champions



28/29 Sep



Discounted rates for  
iHV members

Book today:



THE CPD STANDARDS OFFICE  
CPD PROVIDER: 21481  
2024-2026  
[www.cpdstandards.com](http://www.cpdstandards.com)

<http://bit.ly/4mLxsrR>

Contact us at:  
[training@ihv.org.uk](mailto:training@ihv.org.uk)

Wednesday 6 May 2026 | Bournemouth International Centre



# iHV Evidence-based Practice Conference

From Evidence to Action: Getting it right from the start



Book your place



Hybrid Conference

# Thank you so much for joining us



## CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

This is to certify that



has attended the following 1-hour activity:

**iHV Insights:**

Delivered By:  
**INSTITUTE OF HEALTH VISITING**

Date: :

*This certificate should be kept within your CPD record and may be used as supporting evidence in revalidation with the Nursing and Midwifery Council.*

CEO, Institute of Health Visiting

Institute of Health Visiting  
A Registered Charity Number 1149745  
c/o Royal Society for Public Health, John Snow House, 59 Mansell Street, London E1 8AN  
Telephone: +44 (0) 207 265 7352 | Email: [info@ihv.org.uk](mailto:info@ihv.org.uk) | [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

## iHV Insights Learning Record



<b>Number of hours completed:</b>	
<b>ACTIVITY</b> – What did you undertake? How many hours were participatory? How many hours were individual?	
<b>LEARNING</b> – What were your key insights from the activity?	
<b>INFLUENCE ON PRACTICE</b> – How will I use this knowledge, skill or experience in my practice? What difference will it make to me/ to children, young people, families and communities? Has this knowledge, new skill or experience changed your attitude or thinking, if so, in what way?	
<b>FURTHER ACTIONS</b> – What needs to happen for me to use this learning?	
<b>LINK TO NMC CODE (2018)</b> - Which theme or statement does my learning or development support and why?	
<b>LINK TO STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY (NMC, 2022)</b> - Please identify the part or parts of the relevant standards that you used to inform your CPD	
<b>ANYTHING ELSE TO NOTE:</b>	

For further information, please access: <http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/>

## Continue your CPD!

After this event you will be able to access the following resources on the iHV website:

- A recording of this live session (no recording on other devices is allowed)
- This slide set
- Links and background reading
- A link to download a Record of Attendance & reflection template

Log in at [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk) and head to the Insights page

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