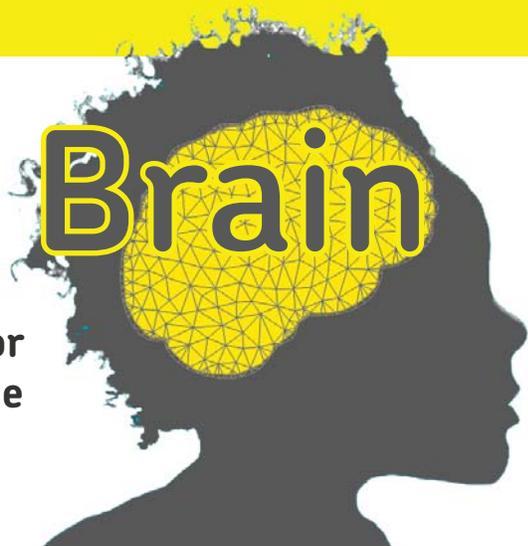


Building the Brain



The best opportunity to prepare our children for success in life is during the first years, when the brain is developing most rapidly.

Brain Facts:

A baby's brain makes **ONE MILLION** new connections every second.

About **90%** of the brain is developed by age 5.

Brain connections are strengthened through **stimulating learning opportunities & nurturing relationships with caregivers.**

Good nutrition is essential for healthy brain and nervous system development.



Getting kids ready for school and for life means more than helping them with their ABCs, packing their lunches, filling their backpacks and getting them to the bus on time. It starts day one with quality early experiences.

LET'S GROW KIDS
FOCUS ON THE FIRST YEARS

High-Quality Child Care Can Support Healthy Development



More than 70% of Vermont infants & toddlers have all of their parents in the labor force. For these children, child care is likely to play a key role in supporting their development.

When the term “**high-quality**” is used to describe a child care program, it often means that program:

- Is staffed by nurturing caregivers who are educated in early learning & development
- Offers activities that have been shown to promote learning and healthy social & emotional development
- Keeps children safe

STARS

Vermont has a voluntary child care quality and improvement recognition system called **ST**ep **A**head **R**ecognition **S**ystem, or **STARS**.

Programs that participate in STARS are given a quality recognition designation of 1 to 5 stars (5 stars being the highest quality recognition level).

Studies have shown that children in high-quality programs are less likely to need special education or be held back a grade, and are less likely to commit a violent crime.

High-quality child care is good for kids and parents, but it is also good for Vermont overall.

Learn more about how high-quality child care supports Vermont’s children, families, businesses and economy at:

letsgrowkids.org

