



Tips for Growing Your Baby's Brain

Tip #2: Pay Attention to Stress

Our bodies deal with stress by making stress hormones. These prepare for "fight or flight" and help us protect ourselves from danger.

When babies and young children are exposed to stress hormones again and again, their brains can be permanently affected.

This is true for unborn babies. If the mother is very stressed, her hormones cross over to the baby and can affect the baby's brain. Infants who are fussy or difficult may have been affected by mother's stress before birth. Stress hormones can destroy brain cells and brain connections.

Children who have been over-exposed to stress at a young age may develop sleep problems, anxiety, aggressiveness, learning problems, and behavior problems.

In children, the problems from exposure to stress can be permanent, causing the child a lifetime of emotional and behavioral difficulties.

If you are pregnant and your life is stressful, don't risk exposing your baby to too many stress hormones. This will only create more problems for you down the road. Find someone to talk to. Learn who can help if you're in a stressful situation.