

THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

"The completion of brain development is dependent on stimulation from the environment."

- **The brain is a DYNAMIC organism that requires stimulation.**
- **The percentage of eventual brain that is evident at birth is 25%. By age two, the percentage of eventual brain is 90%.**
- **The period of most rapid brain development occurs within the first 33 months of life.**
- **The brain is use dependent - use it or lose it.**
- **Parts of the brain can be underbuilt (effects of neglect) and overbuilt (effects of abuse).**
- **Violent tendencies can begin in the womb and be well-rooted by preschool.**
 - **"It is not the finger that pulls the trigger - it is the brain [that tells it to do so]." Dr. Bruce Perry**
- **Experiences (physical and emotional) shape brain tissue, brain chemistry and organization.**

CRITICAL THRESHOLDS OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

1. EMPATHY

When an emotional bond is established early between a child and caretaker, the ability to develop empathy towards others increases.

2. CONTROL

A child is better able to gain a sense of self regulation when someone is there to help regain calmness.

3. PROBLEM SOLVING

When rules and consequences of behavior are applied, a child can begin to differentiate between right and wrong, and appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.

Society has yet to realize the effects of societal poisons (domestic violence, substance abuse, child abuse/neglect) on our babies.