

The brains of babes ^[1]

Source: CBC

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AVAILABILITY

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Description: Ideas- a program about contemporary thought on the CBC is featuring a three part series entitled 'The brains of babes' focusing on early childhood development'. Highlight: Episode 3 - Broadcast March 17, 2009 In December of 2008 the United Nations' Children's Fund, Unicef, released a report card documenting how well the richest 25 countries were doing in supporting early child development. Canada tied with Ireland for last place. We were behind such countries as the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Portugal, Mexico, the United States and of course, the all Nordic countries. Of 10 benchmarks considered crucial for healthy child development, Canada reached only one. When it comes to investing in the early years, Canada's showing is dismal. We're one of the most affluent industrialized countries but our governments invest only about 0.2 per cent of our GDP in services for young children. That's well behind the benchmark of 1%. Jill Eisen explores why it matters. Other episodes: Episode 1 - Broadcast March 4, 2009 One of the curious facts about health is a phenomenon called the social gradient. In every country that's been studied, and for every disease and disorder, there's a gradient so that the poorer you are or the lower you are in any social hierarchy, the less healthy you are. And this is true even after if you take things like smoking, diet and exercise into account. Stress in adult life has been pinpointed as one of the contributing factors. But it alone hasn't been enough to explain this phenomenon. In this first program of a series, Jill Eisen talks to researchers who are going back to our beginnings and finding important links between our earliest years and our health as adults. Episode 2 - Broadcast March 11, 2009 In the 1950's and 60's psychologist Harry Harlow conducted a series of experiments with monkeys which were to have a profound influence on our ideas about early childhood. He removed monkeys from their mothers at birth and gave them access to either a wire surrogate mother with a nipple for nursing or a cloth surrogate that was soft but had no opportunity for nursing. Harry Harlow's experiments demonstrated without a doubt the importance of early experience in shaping both biology and behaviour. His work was a milestone in the nature/nurture debate and tipped the balance toward nurture. But the debate raged on, and with the advent of the human genome project, the balance shifted again toward nature. Jill Eisen talks to scientists Steve Suomi, Michael Meaney, and Tom Boyce, who say the old debate is obsolete. They claim it's neither nature nor nurture, but nature and nurture interacting to shape us in the early years.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: health ^[4]

child development ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/09/03/brains-babes>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/09/03/brains-babes> [2] <https://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2009/11/13/the-brains-of-babes-part-13-cd/> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/health> [5]

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