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NEWSLETTER

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## **The Relationship between the Home Cognitive Environment and the Development of Infants and Toddlers Aged 0-3 Years**

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**T**HE first few years of a child's life witness the most rapid development in his or her entire life. Promoting the physical and mental health development of infants and toddlers at the age of 0-3 years is receiving widespread attention in China and abroad. Published in *Psychological Development and Education* recently, this study analyzes the mechanisms of the effects of family cognitive environment, child care experiences, and effortful control on the development of infants and toddlers at the age of 0-3 years, selecting parents of infants and toddlers aged between 0 and 3 as respondents. Effortful control refers to individual-initiated self-regulation of emotional responses and behaviors, and it reflects individual differences in self-control, attention adjustment, and behavioral inhibition and activation.

Findings of the study:

- Infant and toddler effortful control has a mediating effect between the family cognitive environment and infant and toddler development, that is, the family cognitive environment influences infant and toddler development by acting on their effortful control. High-quality family cognitive environments provide rich opportunities for infants and toddlers to exercise effortful control, allowing them to regulate and manage their emotions and behaviors in different tasks, thus contributing to their overall development.
- The first half of the mediating pathway “family cognitive environment-effort control-infant and toddler development” is moderated by whether or not the infant or toddler is enrolled in child care, The effect of family cognitive environment on infant and toddler effortful control is greater when they are enrolled in child care and weaker when they do not have any experience in child care.

Based on the above findings, the authors suggest that parents and educators should create a cognitively stimulating environment for infants and toddlers at home and in nurseries under the premise of ensuring safety and

health, which facilitates high-quality parent-child interactions and provides appropriate play materials, and that effortful control should be exercised in daily life to promote infant and toddler development.

*Source: Psychological Development and Education, 2020; 2020(2):178-185.*