

The Story of **AUTISM**



PART 4: **MOVEMENT AND MILESTONES REALLY MATTER**

THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

The brain and the body are NOT two separate entities. They are, in fact, very co-dependent.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

This being the case, it is important to understand that:

Movement or muscle activity is the single most important element in early brain development.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Every movement a baby make stimulates a brain cell, and the more a brain cell is stimulated, the more it will grow and the faster it will work to build connections and form functional networks.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Babies pass through a series of developmental milestones during their first year of life - grasping, sucking, rolling over, sitting up, crawling and creeping.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

As parents, we all rejoice when our babies achieve each one of these milestones, but we aren't overly concerned if they are a bit delayed, **because the medical community has not as yet connected their importance to reflex retention and the increased likelihood of autism.**



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

But they should, and **here's why.**

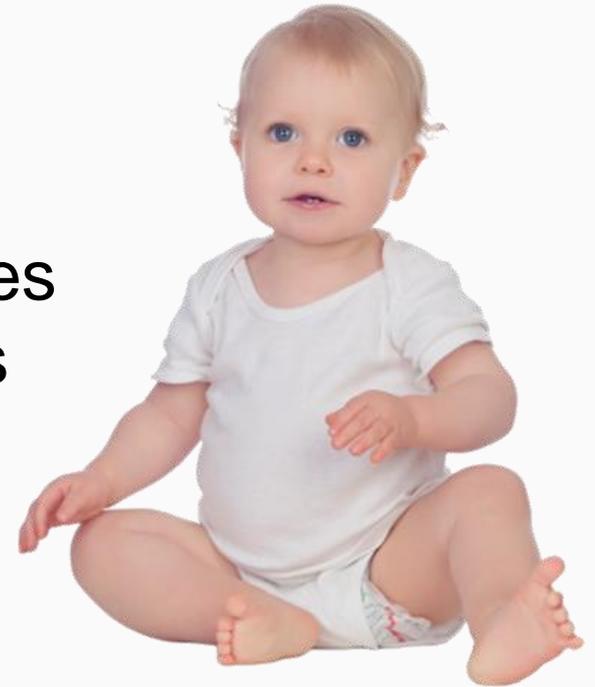
As each milestone is met, critical neurological information is fed back to the brain, telling it to inhibit the primitive, automatic reflexes that make these basic movements possible.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

They are removed from the central nervous system and intentional, postural reflexes are released to take their place.

However, year after year, decade after decade, new baby care devices come on the market to make things easier on ever busier parents.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

And there is nothing wrong with these clever time and effort saving conveniences – I took advantage of many of them myself – except for the fact that they allow some babies to miss or blow right through some important milestones.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Many babies nowadays spend extended time in car seats or baby carriers, or in jumpers and walkers, which restrict the movements that are required for primitive reflex integration.

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I've often heard moms proudly proclaim that their babies skipped the creeping and crawling phases altogether – and just started walking!



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

This is a great accomplishment, but it might have dire repercussions down the road. Because the brain gets important feedback from the crawling muscles that it uses to build a proprioceptive body map.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Bouncy seats, baby swings, cars seats that convert into baby carriers – the list goes on. BUT the main culprit, the one that might have shifted the scales in favor of autism, is the **baby walker**.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Baby walkers were not in use much in the **1950s and 60s**. Back then most of us had never heard of **autism**, probably because it did not become an official diagnosis until 1980.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

The trend toward the use of baby walkers increased upward in the 80s and 90s, just as we have seen the trend in autism do. Small wonder, because the manufacturers keep adding more and more enticing gadgets to the dashboards to keep baby happily engaged for longer periods of time.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

Let me be perfectly clear about one thing. I am by NO MEANS blaming parents. I am one of them!

The thing is... we just didn't know any better.



THE STORY OF AUTISM: Movement and Milestones

In trying to do the best for our kids – to keep them safe and happily occupied – we took advantage of the latest trends in parenting. Turns out, **those trends were not always in baby's best interest neurologically.**



Neurodevelopment Through Movement

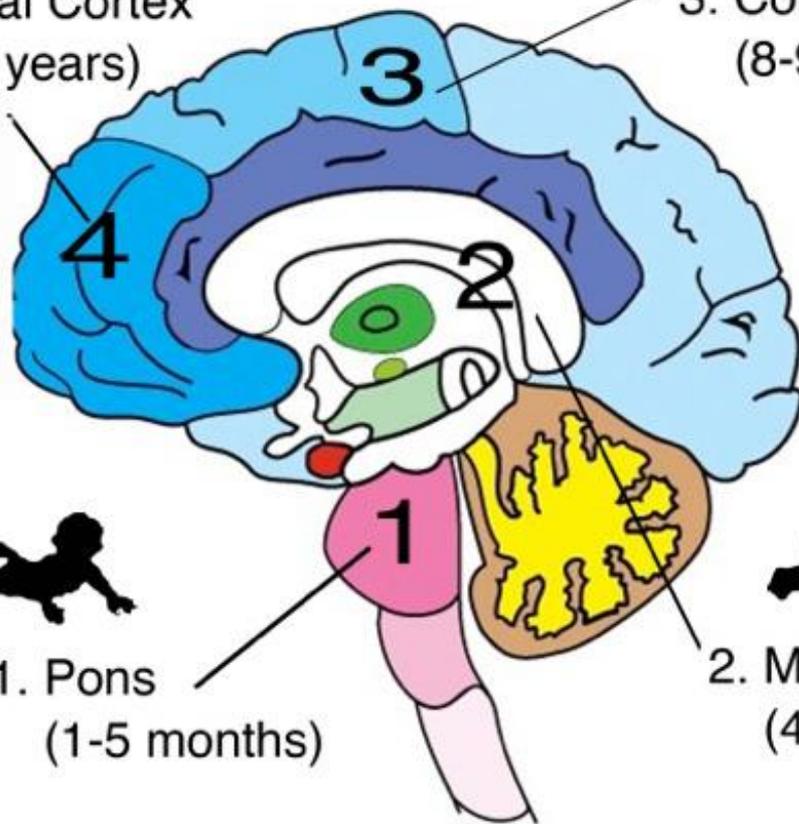
4. Prefrontal Cortex
(until 25 years)

3. Cortex
(8-96 months)

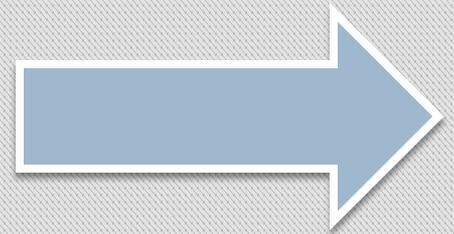


1. Pons
(1-5 months)

2. Midbrain
(4-13 months)



GO ON TO THE NEXT PRESENTATION



The Story of
AUTISM

PART 5:

**LESS
UNSTRUCTURED
FLOOR TIME =
MORE AUTISM**

