

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; providing that  
3           state-funded education and care programs for  
4           infants and toddlers must foster brain  
5           development; encouraging family daycare centers  
6           to comply with specified requirements;  
7           requiring an evaluation and a report; providing  
8           an effective date.

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10           WHEREAS, at birth, a child has one hundred billion  
11 brain cells that will be developed by the experiences of life,  
12 and

13           WHEREAS, the stimulation that causes brain development  
14 can be positive, such as conversation, music, and parental  
15 love, or it can be negative, such as neglect or emotional and  
16 physical abuse, and

17           WHEREAS, during the first year of a child's life the  
18 connections between the cells, the synapses, increase  
19 twenty-fold, making the first year a crucial time for brain  
20 development, and

21           WHEREAS, infants develop synapses when they listen to  
22 language and music, see colors and shapes, and feel and handle  
23 objects of different sizes, shapes, and textures, and

24           WHEREAS, there is no other time in a child's life as  
25 productive for brain development as the first year, NOW  
26 THEREFORE,

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28 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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30           Section 1. Each state-funded education and care  
31 program for children from birth to 5 years of age must provide

1 activities to foster brain development in infants and  
2 toddlers. A program must provide an environment rich in  
3 language and music and filled with objects of various colors,  
4 shapes, textures, and sizes to stimulate visual, tactile,  
5 auditory, and linguistic senses in the children and must  
6 include classical music and at least 30 minutes of reading to  
7 the children each day. A program may be offered through an  
8 existing early childhood program such as Healthy Start, the  
9 Title I program, contracted or directly operated subsidized  
10 child care, the prekindergarten early-intervention program,  
11 Florida First Start, the Head Start program, or a private  
12 childcare program. A program must provide training for the  
13 infants' and toddlers' parents including direct dialogue and  
14 interaction between teachers and parents demonstrating the  
15 urgency of brain development in the first year of a child's  
16 life. Family daycare centers are encouraged, but not required,  
17 to comply with this section.

18           Section 2. The Executive Office of the Governor shall  
19 contract for an evaluation of programs to stimulate brain  
20 development in infants and toddlers and shall report the  
21 results of the evaluation to the President of the Senate and  
22 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1,  
23 2000.

24           Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
25 law.  
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