



BIRTH OUTCOMES

Premature birth can lead to lifelong developmental and intellectual disabilities for babies. In the first few years of life, babies' brains are forming the neural connections for social, emotional, cognitive, and language development that shape their capacity to read by third grade and subsequently access their full potential.

Very
Preterm

32
weeks

Moderately
Preterm

34
weeks

Late
Preterm

36
weeks

Early
Term

39
weeks

Full
Term



Babies born prior to 39 weeks of gestation are more likely to experience **poor health outcomes** than those born at full term.

Obstetrics & Gynecology [2013]

Early-term infants born at 37 weeks face a 33% increased risk of **severe reading impairment** compared to 3% of those born at 40 weeks.

Pediatrics [2012]





Newborns admitted to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) are **6X** more likely at 36 months to develop disorganized attachment than their counterparts—an indicator highly predictive of later mental health disorders.

Early Human Development [2015]

Children born before 28 weeks of gestation, but without severe neurodevelopmental disorders, are still up to 8X more likely to have symptoms indicating **mental health problems** by age 11.

Pediatrics [2016]





Increased parent-infant language interactions in the NICU is associated with improved language and cognitive outcomes of preterm babies at 18 months of age.

Pediatrics [2014]



Children born at 30 weeks are 3.5X more likely to be diagnosed with **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder** than children born at 40 weeks, while those born at 25 weeks are almost 6X more likely.

Pediatrics [2015]

Late-preterm babies born between 34 to 36 weeks are:

36% more likely to have a developmental delay or disability;

19% more likely to be suspended in kindergarten; and

10 - 13% more likely to be placed in special education and retained in kindergarten.

Pediatrics [2009]





Kangaroo Mother Care (continuous skin-to-skin contact between parent and infant) for preterm and low-birthweight infants is linked to better school attendance, reduced hyperactivity, and less aggressiveness in young adults.

Pediatrics [2017]

Participating in a shared reading program in a NICU significantly reduces a child's likelihood of hyperactivity, separation anxiety, and behavior problems; improves attachment; and provides parents with an **increased sense of control and a source of comfort.**

