



ATTENTION: GUEST BOOKERS/SEGMENT PRODUCERS IS MY KID “NORMAL?” - WINNING THE MOMMY COMPETITION

FORMAT: Discussion and/or Question & Answer

GUEST(S) Frans Plooij, Ph.D, author of the international bestselling parental guidebook, *The Wonder Weeks*, and one of the world’s top specialists in infant/child development and parent-baby interactions; new moms and dads and/or parents-to-be; moms and their babies

WHY: We’ve all seen or experienced it: Moms “competing” with one another. For moms - especially new moms - there is always that pang of “Is my kid ‘normal?’” especially as all the other moms in the playground boast of their youngster’s latest accomplishments. So, whether it’s my kid vs. yours in whatever category (standing, walking, rolling over, smiling... the list goes on and on). The daily conversation on the playground has taken a spirited spin. But before Team Mommy gets fed up, takes her toys and heads off the field, she needs to remember a few things...

All these “competitions” are really based on a baby’s developing motor skills. Trying to achieve the next milestone. But WHY?

SO WHO WINS? REALLY? Every child (with the exception of those with medical issues) will walk, roll over, or what-have-you at one point. But, will those who take their first steps first be the ones to achieve great things later in life? Would Obama and Steve Wozniak have been the winners in this walking competition? Most probably not!

AND INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE BACKS IT ALL UP! Every infant goes thru 10 predictable mental development leaps in their first two years. With each leaps the baby / toddler is able to perceive things he never perceived before. With every leap a whole new world of explorable new things reveals itself to the baby.

When it comes to what and when a baby does and on what timeframe, it’s a matter of picking and choosing – or free will. In this whole new world, one has to choose which things / skills he wants to master first. Some choose the motor skills (walking, rolling over, etc.), which are really nicely observable for everybody; and others choose the more sophisticated skills, the less-noticeable-but-more-promising-for-the-future skills. Like finding out what gravity is, how things change in perspective while moving.

FOR EXAMPLE: There was this boy whose parents believed he was falling within the autistic spectrum. While their other kids were playing, making a lot of noise and running about, he sat in the corner, playing with a spool for hours. Turning it around, looking at it, and doing 'nothing.' Or so they thought. Fast-forward 40 years and he is one of the most innovative IT professionals in the world, holding a double degree from a top university. And a millionaire.

Seems that his doing “nothing” was actually quite something! Letting the spool slip through his fingers and slowly fall to the ground was his feeling how gravity worked. He didn’t just throw it to the ground; he *felt* the action of how it fell. He played with the movements of his fingers, showing him the point where gravity took over. He got so much into this, that he forgot the world around him. By turning the spool, he saw how the perspective of things changed while holding it in different angles. He was doing baby-science, and not so much interested in motor skills. Actually, he never ever really learned how to walk. He just did at one point. Never fell, never made a mistake. Why? Because he took his time observing people walk. He learned by observing the movements of others. Same goes with riding his bike. He never really “learned,” he just did.

He wasn't the first one to walk, not to ride a bike. but he didn't get the experience (or scrapes and bruises) of trial and error, but then again, he never needed to.

MORE BACKGROUND/STATISTICS

- According to AmericanPregnancy.org, there are more than 4 million babies born each year in the United States. That’s about 1 baby every 4 seconds!
- Moms-to-be and new moms are overwhelmed by their busy lives and responsibilities. Add a fussy baby to the mix, and they are as stressed out as any CEO – maybe even more so.
- All babies go through a difficult period around the same age.
- Research has shown that babies make 10 major, predictable, age-linked changes – or leaps – during their first 20 months of their lives. During this time, they will learn more than in any other time. With each leap comes a drastic change in your baby’s mental development, which affects not only his mood, but also his health, intelligence, sleeping patterns and the “three C’s” (crying, clinging and crankiness). This happens because they’ve reached a radical new step in their mental development. That is good: it gives them the opportunity to learn new things. The “difficult” behavior is actually a signal that great progress is underway.
- New parents are not looking for someone to tell them how to parent; they are the experts of their own baby. Instead, they want to be reassured and know that what their child is experiencing is “normal.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Website (www.thewonderweeks.com) for background articles, scientific finding, short films with Dr. Plooij explaining the research behind the book – but in a very “parent-friendly” way and more.

Where parents can connect directly with Frans to ask questions:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WonderWeeks>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/thewonderweeks>

The Wonder Weeks is available at www.thewonderweeks.com, Amazon.com, Amazon.co.uk and at most online booksellers.

More information about The Wonder Weeks, including details about the research behind the book, can be found at www.thewonderweeks.com and (in video) <http://www.youtube.com/thewonderweeks>. To schedule an interview with Dr. Frans X. Plooij or to receive additional background, please contact: Xaviera Plas @ +31 6 418 414 73 or email xaviera@thewonderweeks.com