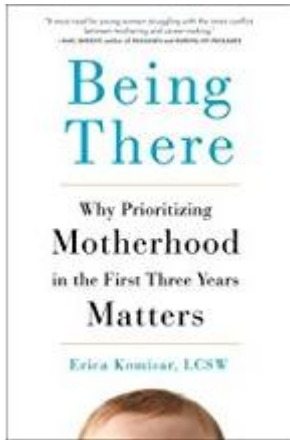


## New Research Reveals that Babies Need Their Moms

book review by Barb Anderson



Researcher and psychoanalyst Erica Komisar has written an informative book about the importance of the mother-child bond entitled *Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters*. Drawing upon years of study in the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and epigenetics, Komisar concludes that babies need constant contact with their mothers to develop a healthy central nervous system.

Komisar discovered that the central nervous system of a newborn is not fully developed. The mother's central nervous system compensates for what the baby is lacking when she cares for her baby and cuddles her child.

When a mother comforts her child, she is “actually regulating that baby’s emotions from the outside in.” Her act of comforting produces oxytocin (the bonding hormone) in the baby. The more oxytocin a child produces in the first three years, the better the child will be able to respond to stress and regulate his/her emotions later on in life.

Komisar’s research revealed that babies in daycare situations showed much lower levels of oxytocin than infants who spent more time being cared for and cuddled by their mothers. Daycare and other mother substitutes do not provide the same benefit for a child’s emotional development because children need their mothers on a daily basis. Komisar concludes that “mothers are biologically necessary for babies.”