



How to Support Your Child's Brain Development

Support interests Following a child's lead, offering choices, and encouraging their interests are key to supporting brain development. Children learn so much by exploring their interests with a supportive adult. Parents can help support, but not dominate, an activity your child is doing.

Modify spaces Make modifications to spaces so that children are able to explore their interests as fully as possible. For children with disabilities or suspected delays, modify spaces in your home so that children can more easily participate. For example, create open floor spaces and pathways so a child can move easily throughout the home.

Focus on child-centered social interactions Young children recognize when they are part of the conversation or activities. Make space and take time to let children respond and build on the interaction through language or actions. You can help include children in tasks that are done regularly.

Create predictable routines for children Consistent, regular experiences help children feel more secure. Infants and toddlers love to do things again and again. This repetition helps them learn. Look for opportunities to help build and improve your family routines to support consistency. For example, if a child often struggles with nap time, you might try signaling nap time with a favorite calming song or a predictable cozy, quiet time that includes reading from a selection of favorite books.

Help young children regulate their emotions through responsive care Providing extra regulatory support, like holding toddlers to help them calm down, is key. Children under 5 don't have the neural networks in place to control their impulses or fully regulate their emotions. Helping children regulate their emotions allows them to learn skills to self-soothe later. They also learn that they can depend on adults when they are feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and upset. These early relationships are fundamental to healthy brain development.

Information taken from: eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/supporting-early-brain-development-building-brain

Book Reading Tips: We're Going on a Leaf Hunt

By Steven Metzger

Show the book's cover and read the title aloud together as you point at its words.

Label the four corners of your room: mountain, forest, waterfall and lake. Begin reading in the mountain corner.

Encourage your child or children to say "It's a wonderful day" together. Pretend to hike up a mountain as you make your way to the forest corner.

Pretend to pick up leaves along the way each time you move to a new corner.



Fun fact!

Grocery stores are generally all designed the same way. These are some things to notice when shopping that will not only make it faster and easier to finish the task, but also less tempting to deviate from the list! Shop the perimeter of the store first — this is where the healthy whole foods are generally located. The middle of the store contains the processed and unhealthy foods. The most expensive items are usually placed at eye level, so if you do decide to enter the middle aisles of tempting doom, your wallet will appreciate looking at the top and bottom of the shelves.