

Helping Babies Think



The amount of language children hear is important, but having a chance to talk too is equally important. Asking questions, making observations, and pausing to give children a chance to respond (even if it is just a grunt or a squeal) builds language skills.

Have a Conversation

Using "parentese" or infant-directed speech, the sing-song style of speech adults tend to use with infants, helps children identify speech sounds and learn language patterns.

Exaggerate Sounds

Young children learn best from back-and-forth interactions with other people.

Make It Social

Responding in a warm and responsive way helps children feel more secure, both in the context of the relationship and as they explore the world around them.

Keep it Positive

Babies aren't very good at self-regulation. Babies learn better when they have help regulating the levels of stimulation in their environment. Being able to recognize when it is time to take a break or have a nap helps too!

Be a Regulator

Trying and failing multiple times, instead of succeeding on the first try, helps toddlers understand that sometimes you have to try multiple times before you get it right!

Model Persistence

When an adult responds to a child in a way that is tailored exactly to what that child did or said, children tend to learn more from the interaction.

Respond in Kind

Share Your Thinking

Make it Predictable

It's hard to tell what someone is thinking unless you share it. Narrating what you're doing, for example, saying "Hmmm . . . I want a glass of water" as you open the cabinet to reach for a cup helps children begin to connect your actions with the mental states guiding them.

Consistent daily routines help children sift through the sometimes messy reality of life and order their experience of the world.

Work as a Team

Children tend to do better on tasks and are more motivated if they feel like they are part of a group. Using language like "we are going to work on this project together" helps children feel included.

Prioritize Play

Play helps children to contextualize their world and provides an opportunity to understand a concept better.

Follow Their Lead

Sometimes it can be hard not to take over! But letting children lead and paying attention to their interests helps tailor the learning experience to their unique needs and curiosities.