



Help Your Child Observe and Explore!

Your child was born to be an explorer! Starting at birth, your child observes and discovers new things. This is a basic part of scientific thinking, and you can nurture it in your infant, toddler or preschooler. With scientific thinking skills, your child will be better prepared to start school. Helping your child to observe and explore is easy, and it's fun. Try these suggestions:

YOUR INFANT:

- Hug, snuggle, kiss and talk to your baby. When you stimulate your baby's senses, you give him or her more ways to see, feel and hear the world. That's what your baby needs in order to learn to pay attention and explore.
- Let your baby play with pull toys, "touch and feel" books, rattles, and other toys that he or she can touch and react to.

YOUR TODDLER:

- Help your toddler to blow soap bubbles. Toddlers love to watch and pop the bubbles. Talk about how his or her breath helps to make the bubbles.
- Take a walk together. Help your toddler to safely put his or her fingers in the grass, or to touch stones or flowers or trees. Talk about insects that live in the grass. Look at the different kinds of trees and flowers.
- Help your child to mix paint colors to see what happens. Or carefully add a little water to play-doh to see how it changes. How is the play-doh different?

YOUR PRESCHOOLER:

- Help your preschooler take apart a flashlight, or another safe object, to see what's inside.
- Take ice cubes out the freezer and watch what happens to them. Talk about how and why they melt. Then help your child freeze them again.
- Take a cutting from a house plant, root it, and help your pre-schooler plant in a pot. Help your child to water and care for "his" or "her" plant it and watch it grow.
- Help your child touches different kinds of objects (the refrigerator, the couch, pots and pans, cookie trays, or the floor) with a magnet. Talk about what happens.

ParentTips is a monthly resource for parents with young children.
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