



Help Your Child Use Tools To Discover!

Your child was born to find out about the world! To discover, your child will use different tools. Not "tools" like a hammer or a wrench. Instead, your child will use a magnifying glass, a spoon, or a sand shovel to help him or her learn. Using tools to discover and learn is a part of scientific thinking. You can support your child's learning. It will give him or her a better start in school. 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 see 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.
- Place your infant in front of a mirror. Point at the baby in the mirror. Move your infant up and down or side to side. Make faces at your child. Talk with your child about what you are doing.

YOUR TODDLER:

- Give your toddler materials to use creatively: paper, cardboard, cotton, cloth, small plastic containers, safe scissors and glue. Encourage your child to make anything he or she wants; don't steer the child toward "right" things to make. Let your toddler be creative.
- Give your child a play "tool kit" of plastic tools to do "jobs" around the house. Or help him or her to make a "hammer" and other tools out of cardboard or play-doh.
- Let your child "help" as you shovel snow, work in the yard, or clean the house. A plastic play shovel, rake, dust cloth, or broom can allow your child to safely work alongside you.

YOUR PRE-SCHOOLER:

- Supervise as your pre-schooler looks at objects through a magnifying glass. Look at bugs, leaves, flowers, printing on a page, or anything your child finds interesting. Ask what he or she sees, and talk about it.
- Help your child use an egg beater to whip up bubbles in water, or to make foamy suds. Talk about what happens.
- Drop food coloring into water, and talk about the different colors. Let your child mix colors to see what happens.

ParentTips is a monthly resource for parents with young children.
For more ParentTips, visit www.readyatfive.org or call 410-727-6290.