



Build Your Child's Brainpower!

Did you know that every day since birth, your child has been growing and learning? Everything that happens to your baby – seeing light coming in through a window, hearing the sound of your voice – helps your child's brain to grow. To help, try some of these fun ParentTips with your child:

YOUR INFANT:

- Cuddle your baby even when she is not crying. Holding and talking to your infant are important for her brain! It will help her feel secure.
- Make eye contact with your baby and speak in a warm and soothing voice while changing a diaper or feeding or bathing. Tell baby what you are doing, then watch for his response and say something back to continue the "conversation."

YOUR TODDLER:

- Talk in full sentences to your toddler in Spanish or English. Add words to his speech: If he says, "car," say, "That's a blue car." Use every chance you can to point things out to your child: "Look at that big tree! Its leaves are so green!"
- Read to your child every day in Spanish or English. Ask questions about the story as you do. Books with big, clear pictures are best.
- Recite some rhymes, and see if your toddler can make some up.

YOUR PRE-SCHOOLER:

- Set a special time for reading every day: nap time, after-dinner time, or bedtime. Let your pre-schooler read to you if he or she can, or let him or her lead you through a story from memory.
- (Very carefully!) Let your child "help" with chores by using a broom, dusting a table or sorting laundry by colors. These can be fun ways for children to learn.
- Make (and play!) musical instruments. Use paper towel tubes, old pots, plastic pails, tin cans (with no sharp edges), cardboard, and anything else handy. Play along with the radio, or give a "concert."
- While you're on a walk or going to the store, help your child to look around and explore. Watch the big machines at a construction site and talk about what they are doing. Let your child feel the bark of different trees. Count the different kinds of cars and talk about what makes them different.

ParentTips is a monthly resource for parents with young children.
Want more Suggestions? Visit www.readyatfive.org or call 410-727-6290.