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1Read to and with your child. Reading helps develop important communication skills, vocabulary, and grammar. In addition, reading helps children learn a lot more about the world. It expands their horizons and can bring them into contact with people and information that they might never experience otherwise. As a result, reading is one of the most important ways to raise and nurture an intelligent child. Try reading with your child is a baby. Make reading fun for your child is a baby. Make reading fun for your child to discuss what they have read with you. Schedule time for regular trips to the library.[1] 2Regulate your childs television watching. While television is not necessarily a bad thing for children to spend time watching, it presents several problems for parents who want to take a proactive stance raising their children. Perhaps most importantly, television occupies time that could be used on more stimulating activities. In addition, some studies have indicated that watching television can stunt the intellect or limit a childs intellectual growth. The US Department of Health recommends that children under the age of two and five should not have more than one hour of screen time each day and kids between the ages of five and 18 should have no more than two hours of screen time each day.[2]Make sure that your child watches shows appropriate for them. Have your child watch shows that stimulate his or her brain, such as Discovery Kids. Treat television as a treat, not a right. Make your child's television experience more active rather than passive; have your child sing along with the characters or talk to your child toys that stimulate the brain. As educators and developmental theorist have known for a long time, toys are an important part of a childs intellectual growth and development. As a result, you should put thought into the toys you purchase for your child and make sure that your childs toys are developmentally advantageous. Of course all children use toys different, and different children use toys different children use toys different children use toys are developmentally advantageous. puzzles) are a good choice. Toys and games that allow your child to express creativity (like Legos or Lincoln logs) are beneficial. Toys that allow your child be limited, and you should vet every video game to make sure it has educational and intellectual value before allowing your child to play.EXPERT TIP Our Family Plays Games Board Game Experts Our Family Plays Games, LLC is a family-owned business based in Omaha, Nebraska. Launched in 2018, their mission is to promote growth and awareness of the modern board game hobby and bring more BIPOCs and families into the board game community. In June 2020 they were featured on Good Morning America and have since been featured on NBC News Online, Senet Magazine (UK), Ligadas.com (Brazil), a variety of YouTube programs, podcasts, and on local television. In January of 2022, they launched a second program on their channel, called OFPG Voices to highlight other underrepresented voices in the hobby. In addition, they make special appearances at board game conventions all around the country and work with board games are a fantastic mental workout for both you and your kids. The strategic thinking and problem-solving required during gameplay stimulate cognitive functions like memory and planning. They present mental challenges while still being fun to play, so you can all sharpen your childs interests. An important element of raising an intelligent child is nurturing your childs interests. An important element of raising an intelligent child is nurturing your childs interests. You should nurture this and promote uniqueness. You can do this by: Positively reinforcing your child demonstrates an interest in science, take them to a science museum. Buy them books that they are interested in. Enroll them in programs that cater to their interests. If your child loves environmental science, find a summer environmental program for kids at a local university to enroll them in. If your child isn't enthusiastic about school, help them pursue the things they are interested in outside of school so they still develop a passion for learning and research. [4] 5 Expose your child to new things to challenge their interests. If you only cater to your child's interests, they might miss out on things they have not been exposed to. In order to prevent this, you should go out of your way to introduce your children to traditionally feminine and masculine topics such as cooking, childcare, and nurturing, as well as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Tell your child to different ways of viewing the world in terms of gender relations, culture, and intellectualism. Your child does not have to fit into any sort of traditional mold and can adopt different ideas in order to fashion their own unique identity. Advertisement 1Play with them, or you can talk to your child as they play. You can choose to sit down and play with them, or you can talk to your child as they play. This way, youll learn more about your child and about their specific type of intelligence. You might also be able to steer them toward playing styles and activities that are more enriching. But remember: Always let your child regularly about their interests. This way, youll learn about your child and youll be able to determine how your child is progressing intellectually over time. You can choose the conversation. When your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation rather than just quickly answering them. Ask your child questions, and see how they respond. Remember, though, there is no right answer. Your goal should be just to engage your child. One of the most important parts of talking is listening. Make sure you listen carefully to what your child is saying, rather than lecturing to them.[6]3Explain the world to your child. Use every opportunity to explain how things work to your child. This is a critical part of how children learn to understand the world. Use their development over time as a way to introduce them to the world. When your child gets older. Save topics like sex, budgeting, and the complexities of law for children near or over the age of 10.[7] Advertisement 1Enroll your child in the best school for their abilities. Having your child is important because you want your child to be around peers and educators who are as committed to nurturing excellence as you and your child. In addition, you want your child to attend a school that has the resources to fund programs that will benefit your child, like those with well-developed STEM or art programs.[8]2Sign your child up for classes that will challenge him or her. While an intelligent child might succeed and prosper in any classroom, you should try to sign your child up for specific classes that might nurture your childs success include:Non-conventional pre-kindergarten programs that promote creative growth. Gifted programs in elementary school and high school. Advanced Placement classes in high school. International Baccalaureate classes in high school. [9] 3Communicate with your childs teachers and school administrators. Communicating with your childs teachers and administrators will help ensure that your childs teachers about higher level work that your child might be able to do in place of other work. Talk to your childs teachers about readings and activities that will stimulate your childs intelligence and thirst for knowledge. Outside of academics, extracurricular activities are a great way to expand your childs horizons at school. Extracurricular activities will help your child develop into a better-rounded person with a richer base of experiences to draw on. There are a number of activities you can consider: Athletics. Debate club, school newspaper, Model United Nations, and similar clubs. Chorus or band. [10]5Balance your childs academic life and kid-life. An important part of nurturing your childs intelligence is to help create a balanced life for your child. This is because down-time and play-time are important for all children and for creativity. Consider the following: A child who is overcommitted might not be able to realize their potential in any one thing. A child who is overcommitted might lose interest and harbor resentment against an overbearing parent. Overcommitting your child might create undue stress on yourself and on your partner. [11] Advertisement Ask a Question Advertisement Ask a Question Advertisement This article was co-authored by Wits End Parenting. Wits End Parenting is a parentcoaching practice based in Berkeley, California specializing in strong-willed, spirited children with impulsivity, emotional volatility, difficulty listening, defiance, and aggression. Wits End Parenting's counselors incorporate positive discipline that is tailored to each childs temperament while also providing long-term results, freeing parents from the need to continually re-invent their discipline strategies. This article has been viewed 74,921 times. Co-authors: 22 Updated: May 29, 2025 Views:74,921 times. We include products we think are useful for our readers. If you buy through links on this page, we may earn a small commission. Heres our processMeasuring intelligenceRaising a smart babyTakeawayShare on PinterestIf youre like most parents, youre constantly concerned about your childs development. Are they learning enough? Do they know as many words as their friends? Isnt this early (or late) to be reaching these milestones? Its normal to want your beloved little one to be the best and brightest, and you may struggle with comparing your child to their friends. How do you know that your baby is on the right track though? And what can you do to ensure that they reach their best potential? Many long books have been written on the topic of intelligence (and many people spend years studying them!), but weve done our best to break down many of the well-researched ideas and tips into a short read, so you can focus on catching up on that sleep you need with an infant in the house! Its important to remember that all babies are born with potential. While your little one may indeed be a genius, there are all kinds of smarts. bodily-kinestheticverbal-linguisticmathematical-logicalmusicalvisual-spatialintrapersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpersonalinterpe and the world around them. As a result of their dominant intelligence, people learn best in different ways. Additionally, people excel in different areas. So, if you choose to believe Gardner, every baby is smart in their own way, and its just up to you to identify and nurture based on where their intelligences lie. Even if you disagree with Gardners theory, lots of research has shown the earliest years of a childs life are pivotal in determining how their brain develops (though it will keep development, consider that researchers who examined Einstein and other high achievers believe certain parenting behaviors may lead to more successful adults, encouraging a childs independence, but intervening when necessary introducing new ideas and possibilities to a child (and teaching your childs unique needs f you find your childs intervening when necessary introducing new ideas and possibilities to a child (and teaching your childs intervening your chi friends child or even your parents memories of your childhood, using generalized milestone markers may be more helpful. You will want to keep in mind though that many things can impact whether or not child meets each milestone at a certain time including: generalized milestone at a certain time including: generalized milestone markers may be more helpful. individual and may advance in some areas quicker or more slowly than others. If you have concerns about the timing of your childs developmental milestones, make sure to speak with their pediatrician. You dont need special training or tools to do this. Your baby just needs you and the world around them to learn! As you think about how to give your child their very best start, consider the following: Your babys brain development starts while they are still in the womb. Proper nutrition and avoiding things like smoking and drug or alcohol use can help your child to reach their full potential. Regular healthcare during pregnancy can help to prevent complications and premature or preterm deliveries. that can impact a babys brain. You may have heard about psychologist Abraham Maslows hierarchy of needs. At the bottom of his pyramid is self-actualization. The idea behind the pyramid is self-actualization. The idea behind the pyramid is that in order to achieve ones highest potential and purpose, lower level needs must be met. This also applies to your baby. In order to achieve their optimal development, they need to be fed, clean, and warm. Until these basic needs are met, they can not achieve their fullest potential, so time spent feeding or cuddling them in preparation to sleep is time well spent. Taking time to play with your child can help build a bond between you that sets a foundation for other relationships. Playing offers opportunities to practice important social-emotional, communication, and cognitive skills. Its important not to neglect this special time, even with the youngest newborns. Sleep is vital at all ages for consolidating memories (helping us to integrate our experiences and gaining more knowledge). but it is especially essential for infants as their brains continue to grow and process information. As they transition to solid foods, youll want to make sure theyre before theyre born. While this wont impact their development, it will establish a pattern of reading together that can have benefits once theyre out of the belly and in your arms. Books offer language learning opportunities, the chance to bond with caregivers, and exposure to things that a child may not be able to physically see. Remember, the interaction between you and your child is an important part of what makes books so educationally valuable. Consider combining books with cuddles, songs, and silliness for some great brain growth. Language matters! The number of words you expose your child also can increase nonverbal abilities like reasoning and understanding numbers. By making an effort to engage in positive conversations frequently with your child, overall development is likely to improve. (Better behavior, less anxiety, and strong self-confidence can all grow out of conversations.) Also, dont forget to sing together and use music as another form of language. This is also linked to brain development. Mastering different ways to play with their toys can bring self-confidence, spatial awareness, and cognitive development. As a result, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended in 2016 that children under the age of 18 months, the AAP recommends that only high quality programming be shown. Between 2 to 5 years of age, it is suggested to limit screen time to a maximum of 1 hour per day of this high quality programming (shown with an adult present to provide real world connections and help your child understand what they are seeing.) Being active is important for mental and not just physical health. Physical activity releases endorphins, which can help fight feelings of depression and anxiety. It can also build self-confidence, increase self esteem, and build cognitive skills.Remember that growth takes time. Dont forget to set realistic expectations based on generally expected milestones and celebrate even small accomplishments along the way.While its very cool to see a toddler recite state capitals or multiplication facts, dont get too focused on memorization as a sign of smarts Particularly in the early months and years, your child needs to spend lots of time working on their gross and fine motor skills. Developing these skills requires the opportunity to explore, touch, and move. Even as your child ages, many words and facts can be learned in real world contexts. Offering this context can help with retention of information. Your child is learning and growing every day. (Which means you always have to be on your toes!) If you want to help them progress, one of the best things you can do is focus on things that interest them. As you learn more about your childs strengths and weaknesses, youll be able to tailor the activities you engage them in. You dont need lot of fancy gadgets, just time and everyday items. Although its easy to get sucked into feeling competitive with other parents and their children, every baby for all their gifts and focus on developing their talents to their best potential. If youre concerned about your childs development, you can speak with their pediatrician. They will be able to offer you guidance around what is considered typical development and offer referrals to different specialists if necessary. ParenthoodBaby06 Months 1 Year1Encourage reading. There are huge benefits to reading to your child every day. It helps develop their vocabulary and intelligence, as well as emotional bonds. When your child is old enough, let them pick out things to read for themselves. They'll love taking charge of what to read![1] 2Talk about books. With very young children, you can ask them about what they see in a book. Older children can talk about what they think of a book, or how they are reacting to it. If you can make reading a starting point to explore ideas, you'll be turbo-charging your child's mental growth. For instance, when looking at a book with a small child, you can ask questions like Whats that animal called? What do you think it eats? Where do you think it lives? You can ask questions like Whats that animal called? things like So whats that book youre reading about? or "Would you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about things in everyday life. Talking about mundane, everyday life. Talking about? or "Would you make the same choices as the character in the story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about things in everyday life. Talking about? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that story? Ask them questions about books that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that you just read. For example, you might ask, "What did you like best about that you just read. For example things might seem basic to adults. But remember that a child is learning about how the world works, and so everything to them seems new and exciting! Do things like tell stories about your day and talk about their feelings, thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Follow up by asking them why they think that way. For example, you can ask them what their favorite activity is. Then ask, "Why is soccer your favorite thing to do?"Feel free to ask your child some non-judgmental questions about the decisions that they make. In fact, simply asking curious questions can help your child think through various options and decisions.[3]4Limit screen time. There doesnt seem to be any harm in letting older kids spend a moderate amount of time watching TV, playing video games, using entertainment apps, etc. There are also many beneficial learning opportunities available online and via various devices. However, think twice about letting your child have free reign with their devices, even if the content seems educational.[4]Experts recommend zero screen time for children above age 2.Using electronic devices for school work is understandable. However, be wary of internet surfing, too much time on social media, gaming, etc.For their own safety, don't let your child create a social media account unless they're at least 13 years old.[5]Time that could go to using devices could be better spent in more active ways, like exercising, talking with your childs intellectual development and health. Have a serious talk with your child about how to be safe on the internet. Show them what to look out for and encourage them to talk to you when they notice something wrong. If your child about the world, say, "Let's look that up." Together, search for the answer on the internet. This will teach them how to use the internet to learn. 1Encourage your little artist. All of your childs doodles and crafts are more than masterpieces to hang on the fridge! Doing art encourages expression, color and spatial awareness, creativity, confidence, and many other beneficial skills and qualities.[6]Keep plenty of crayons, markers, colored paper, and other craft supplies around at home.Just remember not to judge your childs work. The point isnt to turn them into Picasso, just to let them explore their creativity needs plenty of space to grow.[7]2Develop your childs spatial reasoning skills. Spatial reasoning refers to the ability to visualize things, to understand how things move around and fit together, etc. This kind of reasoning is important for developing both creativity and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills. There are lots of ways to encourage spatial reasoning:[8]Let your child play with blocks, puzzles, and other toys that require movement. Play sports and games outside. Take walks with your child explore things like arts and creativity. However, theres also research that suggests simply listening to music encourages brain development and intelligence, so turn it up![10]If you sing or play an instrument, involve your child in the music making. Your child in your home, in the car, etc. Sing along with them!Sing nursery rhymes, silly songs, holiday songs, and other tunes, especially with young children. For extra fun, try dancing with your child!4Give your child lenty of unstructured play time. Children need at least an hour a day to play on their own, but ideally, they will have more. Unstructured play time allows the child to engage in their own imagination. Avoid overloading your child with activities, and let them have some to just play.[11]Blocks, legos, and other building toys are a great way for your child to create something. Encourage your children. Let them create the scenario, and act along with it. 1Take your child outside. Spending plenty of time outside is good for a childs intelligence as well as their health. Seeing the world outdoors encourages your child to learn about their natural world, increases their curiosity, and can make basic scientific concepts more clear. Try things like: Taking a walk and talking about plants and animals that you see. Going on a hike or stopping by your local park. [12] Letting your child build a treehouse or other project outside. Pointing out unusual or interesting sights when you are outside. Creating a garden with your child. 2 Globalize only increases their knowledge, but also deepens their understanding of other people. If you can travel with your child maps, and talk about different regions of the world. Talk about world news and events. Encourage your child to read about different cultures, and tell them about ones that interest you. Take your child to any multicultural events or institutions in your area. Visit a museum to inspire your child's interest in different cultures. 3Learn a foreign language. Speaking a second (or third, or fourth) language has many benefits, like increasing your child's interest in different cultures. The provide the second (or third, or fourth) language has many benefits, like increasing your child's interest in different cultures. only speak one language at home, thats ok. Your child could take a class, learn from apps and other materials, or spend time around people who speak another language a chore, however. Only try it if your child doesnt even have to become fluent to gain benefits. 1Dont constantly tell your child that theyre smart can actually discourage them. If they constantly hear that theyre intelligent or gifted, they may begin to think that intelligence is completely innate, and that they dont need to try. When things do get difficult, they may then get discourage a growth mindset instead of praising intelligence. Believing that abilities can be gained through effort is called a growth mindset. Fostering this in your child can encourage them to be more well-rounded and intelligence. overall.[16]Praise your child for their hard work rather than their intelligence, with statements like Your effort really paid off on that math test. What a genius!Tell your child stories about when you worked hard for something, especially when you had to struggle to succeed. These techniques will teach your child to persevere and to react well to setbacks. That way, they can maximize the full potential of their intelligence. When your child is struggling with a subject at school, help them learn it in a different way For example, if your child isn't good with math, ask them to help you measure food when you cook or to add up items around the house.3Feed their stomachs to help grow their minds. The old saying is that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and there is some truth to that. If your child is hungry in the morning, theyll have trouble concentrating later in the day, and can become tired or irritable. Feed them well in the morning, and theyll be set up for a day of success.[17]Try to give your child a nutritious breakfast with things like protein and whole grains, instead of sugary cereals and snacks. A nutritious breakfast could include things like oatmeal and fruit, whole-grain toast with peanut butter, yogurt and granola, or an omelette with fillings like spinach and cheese.4Respect different learning styles. Experts now recognize that there are numerous types of intelligence, and different styles that are associated with them. For instance, your child might be a spatial learner, someone who does best when they can try things hands on. Or, your child might be a verbal learner, someone who does best when they can talk about what to do.[18]Be open to your childs learning strategies that they enjoy and that help them reach their potential.5Love your child. The loving connection formed between you and your child and your one-on-one interaction with him provide the foundation for their higher thinking skills. Remember that its not all about the brain! A loving, nurturing, safe, and happy home is one of the greatest gifts you can give a child. Hug, talk to, and play with your child! Positive interaction is key. Don't assume that your child has failed just because they're not conventionally intelligent. Give them help when they're struggling, and encourage them to pursue their dreams. Add New Question What can I do to make my 3 year old smart? Trudi Griffin, LPC, MS Professional CounselorTrudi Griffin is a Licensed Professional Counselor based in Wisconsin. She specializes in addictions, mental health problems, and trauma recovery. She has worked as a counselor in both community health settings and private practice. She also works as a writer and researcher, with education, experience, and compassion for people informing her research and writing subjects. She received Bachelors degrees in Communications and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay. She also earned an MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Marquette University. At 3 years old, a child needs plenty of exploration time. See the above suggestions for sharing experiences with your child that foster curiosity. Question How do I help my 9 year old son improve the speed at which he writes? Trudi Griffin, LPC, MS Professional CounselorTrudi Griffin is a Licensed Professional Counselor based in Wisconsin. She has worked as a counselor in both community health settings and private practice. She also works as a writer and researcher, with education, experience, and compassion for people informing her research and writing subjects. She received Bachelors degrees in Communications and Psychology from the University. Boys develop fine motor skills and language skills later than girls. At 9 years old, he may be a bit young to write fast. Give him some time and keep working on it. If it is handwriting for fun ways of practicing. If it is handwriting he needs to work on, help him talk in stories and formulate ideas verbally and show him how that translates to writing. Ask a Question This article was co-authored by Kathy Slattengren, M.Ed.. Kathy specializes in helping parents build strong, loving relationships with their children. She has helped thousands of parents around the world through Priceless Parenting's online classes, presentations, coaching, and books. Kathy holds a Bachelor's degree in Education and Instructional Design from The University of Washington. Kathy is a member of the National Parenting Education Network, the US Alliance to End the Hitting of Children, the International Society for Technology in Education, and a founding member of Parent Map, and Inspire Me Today. This article has been viewed 291,790 times. To-authors: 51 Updated: June 27, 2022 Views:291,790 Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 291,790 times. "At one stage or the other, these issues listed have to be faced by all the parents. I am thankful to wikiHow, since I could evaluate how I generally behave with my children. Thank you!"..." more A child's brain is not a miniature adult brain. It is a brain born under construction that wires itself to the world. And it's up to parents to create a world both physical and social that is rich with wiring instructions. Based on years of research in neuroscience and psychology, here are seven parenting rules to help your kid build a brain that is flexible and therefore resilient. Carpenters carve wood into the shape they want. Gardeners help things to grow on their own by cultivating a fertile landscape. Likewise, parents can sculpt their child into something specific, say, a concert violinist. Or they can provide an environment that encourages healthy growth in whatever direction the child takes. You might want your kid to play violin in Symphony Hall someday, but forcing them to take lessons (the carpenter approach would be to sprinkle a variety of musical opportunities around the home and see which ones spark your childs interest. Do they love to bang on pots and pans? Maybe your child is a budding heavy metal drummer. Once you understand what kind of plant youre growing, you can adjust the soil for it to take root and flourish. Research shows that, even when children are just a few months old and dont understand the meanings of words, their brains still make use of them. This builds a neural foundation for later learning. So the more words they hear, the greater the effect. They'll also have better vocabulary and reading comprehension. Teaching them "emotion words" (i.e., sad, happy, frustrated) is especially beneficial. The more they know, the more flexibly they can act. Put this advice into action by elaborating on the feelings of other people. Talk about what causes emotions and how they might affect someone: See that crying boy? He is feeling pain from his parents. Think of yourself as your children's tour guide through the mysterious world of humans and their movements and sounds. It can be exhausting when your child is constantly asking, "Why?" But when you explain something to them, youve taken something to them, youve taken something new and novel from the world and made it predictable. Brains work more efficiently when they predict well. Avoid answering why questions with, Because I said so. Children who understand the reasons to behave a particular way can more effectively regulate their actions. If all they know is, I shouldnt eat all the cookies because an authority figure told me so, and Ill get in trouble, that reasoning may not help when parents arent present. Its better if they understand, I shouldnt eat all the cookies because an authority figure told me so, and my brother and sister will be disappointed at missing dessert. This reasoning helps them understand the consequences of their actions and fosters empathy. When your sister. It hurts her and makes her feel annoyed. Tell her you are sorry. The same rule holds for praise: Dont call your daughter a good girl. Instead, comment on her actions: You made a good choice not slugging your brother back. This kind of wording will help her brain build more useful concepts about her actions and herself. Another suggestion is to describe the actions of storybook characters. When someone fails to tell the truth, don't say, "Sam is a more suggestion is to describe the actions of storybook characters. When someone fails to tell the truth, don't say, "Sam is a more suggestion is to describe the actions of storybook characters. When someone fails to tell the truth, don't say, "Sam is a more suggestion is to describe the actions of storybook characters. When someone fails to tell the truth, don't say, "Sam is a more suggestion is to describe the actions of storybook characters." liar," which is about the person. Say, "Sam told a lie, which is about the activity. Then follow up with, Why do you think Sam did that? How will other people feel if they find out? Should they forgive Sam?"By engaging with curiosity, rather than certainty, you're modeling the flexibility they'll need in real-life situations. Youre also signaling that Sam is not inherently dishonest, but lying in a particular situation. Perhaps hed behave more honestly in other circumstances. Have you noticed how some tasks that seem like work to you (i.e., cleaning the house or weeding a garden) can be play to a child? Children learn naturally by watching, playing, and most of all, by copying adults. Its an efficient way to learn, and it gives them a sense of mastery. So hand them a miniature broom or garden spade or a toy lawnmower and let the imitating begin. One caution: Little children will copy you for better or worse. I remember when my daughter was three, she started saying the word cheeses a lot. When her father asked about it, she replied, Oh, mama says it. (If you havent figured it out yet, try saying Oh, cheeses aloud in an exasperated tone.) Along with people that your kids may normally encounter grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends, other kids try to exposing them to as much diversity as you can, especially when they are infants. According to research, babies who interact regularly with speakers officially when they are infants. According to research, babies who interact regularly with speakers officially when they are infants. different languages may retain critical brain wiring that helps them learn other languages in the future. Similarly, babies who see many diverse faces may wire themselves to better distinguish and remember a greater variety of faces in later life. This might be the simplest anti-racism step you can take as a parent. Children love to try things on their own without your help, like getting dressed or assembling puzzles. This is good. You want them to develop a sense of agency. Even actions that look like misbehavior may be a childs attempts to understand their effect on the world. When your two-year-old angel throws her Cheerios on the floor and waits for you to pick them up, she's not manipulating dressed or assembling puzzles. you. More likely, she's learning something about the physics of gravity. She's also learning that her actions have an effect on the world around her. So scoop up the Cheerios and let her try again. Knowing when to step back can be challenging. But if youre always present, guiding your child and taking care of their every need, they dont learn to do things themselves. Sometimes, letting them struggle builds resilience and helps them understand the consequences of their actions. Lisa Feldman Barrett, Ph.D., is a neuroscientist, psychologist and the author of "Seven and a Half Lessons About the Brain." She is a University Distinguished Professor at Northeastern University, with appointments at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital. She is also Chief Science Officer for the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior at Harvard University. Follow her on Twitter @LFeldmanBarrett.Don't miss:We live in an age of progress and modernity. Therefore, parents want to know how to boost their childrens intellectual development. Thankfully, this doesnt necessarily mean piles of books. There are foods and engaging activities that can enhance your children smarterIntellect-boosting products and educational programs flood the market. They promise to turn children into prodigies. At the same time, science supports their usefulness. For example, blocks help children develop cognition, while board games boost preschool maths skills. However, many prove to be ineffective. Instead, children learn best by interacting with human beings. Then, there is a folk belief that praising children develops their self-esteem and academic performance. Many studies prove the opposite praising children who wont succeed in school. Also, childrens beliefs in stereotypes, such as girls having strong language skills and that Asians are maths prodigies, may undermined to be a fixed trait are likely to have children who wont succeed in school. Also, childrens beliefs in stereotypes, such as girls having strong language skills and that Asians are maths a childs academic performance. Foods to Boost Your Childrens Intellectual DevelopmentA child can develop their cognition if they eat the right foods. A proper diet is necessary for your children to empower their brains. Yours will stock up on brain power if they consume these. 1. Greek YogurtFirst of all, is Greek yogurt, a favorite everywhere in the world because of its potential benefits. It contains healthy fat, calcium, and protein. The healthy fat in it will develop your young ones brain cells. It also has probiotics to build a defense against bacteria. Greek yogurt, it is full of healthy fat, minerals, and vitamins. Research shows that avocado is one of the foods that foster a childs intellectual development. It has a soft texture, making it easy to swallow.3. Cheese Also on this list is everyones favorite dairy product, cheese are more palatable than hard ones. They are also lighter in texture. Your children could eat them on their own or mix them with fruit. According to this study, its also one of the foods that contribute to a childs intellectual development.4. Whole Grain PorridgeYou can pound whole grains such as oatmeal, barley, and guinoa into a fine powder. Then, boil them with water. Mix it with milk, fruit, or vogurt once cooked. They offer fiber and protein.5. EggsEgg yolk has cholesterol, which forms the outer lining of brain cells. They are nutritious and digestible. They also contain selenium and Vitamin B12, basic compounds for organ development. According to this research, eggs play a large part in promoting brain growth.6. Nut ButterNut butter is a rich source of protein, fat-soluble vitamins, and healthy fat. The different nuts in it, like pecan, almond, and cashew, contain these elements. Furthermore, nuts have Quercetin, which stimulates brain activity. They work best in young children. You may mix nut butter is becoming increasingly popular. The Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology states that you can make it a part of a childs diet as early as six months.8. LentilsLentils are a wholesome, widely accepted food around the world. They are a rich source of fiber, iron, and protein. These vegetables are easy to prepare, and you can quickly turn them into purees. They are light legume options.9. Leafy Green VegetablesChildren dislike vegetables, almost as a tradition. Use them as a blend so that your young ones will tolerate them. Blend them with carrots or apples. They have lutein and Vitamin K, which stimulate brain activity. Eating fruits like apples boosts a childs intellectual development.10. SalmonA childs growing brain needs DHA. This omega-3 fatty acid is crucial for the development of a babys brain. Cognitive Activities to Boost Your Childrens intellectual development viz concentration, attention, and memory by introducing some simple activities. Theyll build theirself-confidence as well.1. Sing-a-longThe first one on our list of intellect-boosting activities is the tried-and-true sing-along. Play your childrens favorite songs and sing along with them. Do this regularly, and youll soon find them singing by themselves.2. Ask guestionsAsking your childrens favorite songs and sing along with them. Do this regularly, and youll soon find them singing by themselves.2. must we tidy up the beds every morning? will get them to appreciate the importance of being neat. As your children grow into their schooling years, ask questions while they do their homework. Doing this will make them more aware of the things that they are thinking about and learning. 3. Practice the alphabet song regularly and get your children to play with alphabet puzzles like this one. Cut out squares that feature each alphabet, and mix them. Go through each letter and encourage your kids to search for items in the home that begin with each alphabet. A counting Find opportunities to practice counting with your kids. For example, you can get them to count the number of shoes they have. They may count the number of swings in the playground as well. However, be careful your counting everything.5. Shapes and colors. For example, you can say That blue ball is round, when you see one. Or say That is a red, octagon sign when you see it. Get your children to describe objects to you.6. ChoicesOffer your children to recognize and identify the sounds they hear throughout the day. They will begin to relate to objects in their everyday environment.8. Visit interesting placesTake your children to the museum, library or farmers market. Ask questions while they explore the area around them, and gauge their reactions. They may gain learning experiences.9. Play with everyday objectsPlaying with the items in your home is both cost-effective and educational. Get your kids to match lids to pots. They could look in a mirror and point to parts of their body.10. GamesFinally, play a range of games with them. You can play Peek a Boo with your young kids. Engage them by playing Hide and Seek. In all, your children should eat a variety of foods and engage in a range of activities to boost their intellectual development. Copyright 2012-2025 Learning Mind. All rights reserved. For permission to reprint, contact us. 1Read to and with your child. Reading helps develop important communication skills, vocabulary, and grammar. In addition, reading helps children learn a lot more about the world It expands their horizons and can bring them into contact with people and information that they might never experience otherwise. As a result, reading function that they might never experience otherwise. As a result, reading function that they might never experience otherwise. for your child; use different voices and sounds to keep their attention. Encourage your child to read on their own. Encourage your child to discuss what they have read with you. Schedule time for regular trips to the library. [1] 2Regulate your childs the elevision watching, it presents several problems for parents who want to take a proactive stance raising their children. Perhaps most importantly, television occupies time that could be used on more stimulating activities. In addition, some studies have indicated that watching television can stunt the intellect or limit a childs intellectual growth. The US Department of Health recommends that children under the ages of two do not watch TV or spend time in front of other screens, such as computers or tablets. Children between the ages of five and 18 should have no more than two hours of screen time each day. [2]Make sure that your child watches shows appropriate for them. Have your child is television as a treat, not a right. 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Make your child is televisin as a tre hears.[3] Advertisement 3Purchase your child toys that stimulate the brain. As educators and developmental theorist have known for a long time, toys are an important part of a childs intellectual growth and development. As a result, you should put thought into the toys you purchase for your child and make sure that your childs toys are developmentally advantageous. Of course all children are different, and different children use toys differently, so use your best judgement. Toys and games that allow your child to express creativity (like Legos or Lincoln logs) are beneficial. Toys that allow your child to physically move and touch things are often better choices than video game to make sure it has educational and intellectual value before allowing your child to play. EXPERT TIP Our Family Plays Games, LLC is a family-owned business based in Omaha, Nebraska. Launched in 2018, their mission is to promote growth and awareness of the modern board game community. In June 2020 they were featured on Good Morning America and have since been featured on NBC News Online, Senet Magazine (UK), Ligadas.com (Brazil), a variety of YouTube programs, podcasts, and on local television. In January of 2022, they launched a second program on their channel, called OFPG Voices to highlight other underrepresented voices in the hobby. In addition, they make special appearances at board game conventions all around the country and work with board game publishers from around the world. Board games are a fantastic mental workout for both you and your kids. The strategic thinking and problem-solving required during gameplay stimulate cognitive functions like memory and planning. They present mental challenges while still being fun to play, so you can all sharpen your minds together!4Nurture your childs interests. An important element of raising an intelligent child is nurturing your childs interests. You should nurture this and promote uniqueness. You can do this by:Positively reinforcing your childs interests. If your child demonstrates an interest in history, take them to a historic site. If your child demonstrates an interest in science, take them to a science museum. Buy them books that they are interested in. Enroll them in programs that cater to their interests. If your child loves environmental science, find a summer environmental program for kids at a local university to enroll them in. If your child isn't enthusiastic about school, help them pursue the things they are interested in outside of school so they still develop a passion for learning and research. [4] 5 Expose your child's interests. If you only cater to your child's interests, they might miss out on things they have not been exposed to. In order to prevent this, you should go out of your way to introduce your children to different ideas, cultures, and ways of life. Consider:Introduce your children to traditionally feminine and masculine topics such as cooking, childcare, and nurturing, as well as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Tell your children that they can choose to be a cook or a caregiver, and that they can pursue these careers, hobbies, and interests. Introduce your child to different ways of viewing the world in terms of gender relations, culture, and intellectualism. Your child does not have to fit into any sort of traditional mold and can adopt different ideas in order to fashion their own unique identity. Advertisement 1Play with your child. Interact with your child as they play. You can choose to sit down and play with them, or you can talk to your child as they play. This way, youll learn more about your child as they play. This way, youll learn more about their specific type of intelligence. You might also be able to steer them toward playing styles and activities that are more enriching. But remember: Always let your child express their own creativity. Do not inhibit your child is progressing intellectually over time. You can choose to talk about anything with your child, but its better to let your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation. When your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation. When your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation. When your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation rather than just quickly answering them. Ask your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation. the most important parts of talking is listening. Make sure you listen carefully to what your child is saying, rather than lecturing to them.[6]3Explain the world to your child. Use their development over time as a way to introduce them to the world. When your child is young, between the ages of 2-4, explain basic and simple things. Gradually introduce more complexities of law for children near or over the age of 10.[7] Advertisement 1Enroll your child in the best school for their abilities. Having your child attend the best school possible is key in nurturing your childs intelligence. This is important because you want your child. In addition, you want your child to attend a school that has the resources to fund programs that will help your child stimulate their thirst for knowledge. Consider: Charter or magnet schools. Private schools with high ratings. Schools with special programs. [8] 2Sign your child up for classes that will challenge him or her. While an intelligent child might succeed and prosper in any classroom, you should try to sign your child and help him or her expand his or her horizons. Specific classes that might nurture your childs success include:Non-conventional pre-kindergarten programs that promote creative growth. Gifted programs in elementary school or middle school.Honors classes in high school.Advanced Placement classes in high school.International Baccalaureate classes in high school.[9]3Communicating with your childs teachers and administrators. Communicating with your childs teachers and school administrators. need and are being challenged to a level that will nurture their intelligence. Keep an open dialogue with your childs teachers and activities your child can do a contenue their intelligence. Keep an open dialogue with your childs teachers and activities your child can do outside of school.4Find extracurricular activities are a great way to expand your childs intelligence and thirst for knowledge. Outside of academics, extracurricular activities will help your childs horizons at school. There are a number of activities you can consider: Athletics. Debate club, school newspaper, Model United Nations, and similar clubs. Chorus or band. [10]5Balance your childs intelligence is to help create a balanced life for your childs. This is because down-time and play-time are important for all children and for creativity. Consider the following: A child who is overcommitted might be overstressed and develop anxiety. A child who is overcommitted might not be able to realize their potential in any one thing. A child who is overcommitted might not be able to realize their potential in any one thing. your child might create undue stress on yourself and on your partner.[11] Advertisement Ask a Question Advertisement This article was co-authored by Wits End Parenting. Wits End Parenting is a parent-coaching practice based in Berkeley, California specializing in strong-willed, spirited children with impulsivity, emotional volatility, difficulty listening, defiance, and aggression. Wits End Parenting's counselors incorporate positive discipline that is tailored to each childs temperament while also providing long-term results, freeing parents from the need to continually re-invent their discipline strategies. This article has been viewed 74,921 times. Co-authors: 22 Updated: May 29, 2025 Views:74,921 Categories: Nurturing Talent PrintSend fan mail to authors Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 74,921 times. 1Read to and with your child. Reading helps children learn a lot more about the world. It expands their horizons and can bring them into contact with people and information that they might never experience otherwise. As a result, reading is one of the most important ways to raise and nurture an intelligent child. Try reading is one of the most important ways to raise and nurture an intelligent child. different voices and sounds to keep their attention. Encourage your child to read on their own. 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Introduce your child to different ways of viewing the world in terms of gender relations, culture, and intellectualism. Your child does not have to fit into any sort of traditional mold and can adopt different ideas in order to fashion their own unique identity. Advertisement 1Play with your child. Interact with your child as they play. You can choose to sit down and play with them, or you can talk to your child as they play. This way, youll learn more about your child as they play. This way, youll learn more about your child express their own creativity. Do not inhibit your child's creativity.Dont take over their play time.There is no right way to play.[5]2Talk to your child regularly about their interests. This way, youll learn about your child and youll be able to determine how your child is progressing intellectually over time. You can choose to talk about anything with your child, but its better to let your child choose the conversation. When your child asks you something, turn it into a conversation rather than just quickly answering them. Ask your child questions, and see how they respond. Remember, though, there is no right answer. Your goal should be just to engage your child. One of the most important parts of talking is listening. Make sure you listen carefully to what your child is saying, rather than lecturing to them.[6]3Explain the world. Use every opportunity to explain how things work to your child. Use their development over time as a way to introduce them to the world. When your child is young, between the ages of 2-4, explain basic and simple things. Gradually introduce more complex topics as your child gets older. Save topics as your child gets older. Save topics as your child attend the best school possible is key in nurturing your childs intelligence. This is important because you want your child to be around peers and educators who are as committed to nurturing excellence as you and your child stimulate their thirst for knowledge. Consider: Charter or magnet schools. Schools with high ratings. Schools with special programs that will benefit your child, like those with well-developed STEM or art programs. [8]2Sign your child up for classes that will benefit your child up for classes that will benefit your child up for classes that will benefit your child up for classes that will be expected and prosper in any classroom, you should try to sign your child up for specific classes that will further challenge your child and help him or her expand his or her horizons. Specific classes that might nurture your childs success include:Non-conventional pre-kindergarten programs that promote creative growth. Gifted programs in elementary school or middle school. 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How to make a smart child. How to make your child smarter. How to make a child very intelligent. How to make a child intelligent in school. How to make a kid smarter. How to create an intelligent child. How to make a child become intelligent.