

THREE KEY YEARS

Parenting Tips---Success For Every Child

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Education actually begins at birth.***

Education does not begin at Kindergarten. Education actually begins at birth. The first months and years of life are extremely important parts of the education and development process for each child.

Children who have their brains exercised in the first months and years of life have stronger brains. Physical exercise builds strong muscles. Brain exercise builds strong brains. Neuron connections inside the brain begin immediately for each child—and those connections are strengthened and reinforced by the millions and even billions when parents talk, play, read, and sing directly to their child.

Every set of positive interactions with adults builds the strength of those brain connections. The process is the same for children from every group of people. Talk constantly—point things out—describe things—count things—and, when the children are ready, ask and answer questions about the things in their world.

Every language works and doing multiple languages can be even better than just one language. Having those interactions with the baby and child can be a fun thing for both parents and children—but they are more than just fun. They build strong brains.

Reading books creates another level of fun and has its own effective brain growth experiences. Reading to each child daily strengthens brains and helps create both emotional security and learning capacity for the child.



Playing with blocks and other toys and singing and using musical devices also build millions of needed neuron connections for each child. That time might be fun—but it is also directly reinforcing for the capacity of each child's brain.

Playing simple counting games—“how many apples are in that bowl?”—can also help build the learning skill set for math that will be useful when the children get to school.

Simply watching television does not build either brain strength or vocabulary—but some interactive electronic toys can help with the brain skills for some children after age three.

The first three months of life can be very important for the emotional security for children. Children need comforting in those first months. Children who are hungry in those months need to be fed and children who are stressed or uncomfortable need to be comforted to help create early levels of personal security for each child. Feeding and comforting all children from birth on can help create a solid level and sense of emotional security.

Exercising the brain by talking, interacting, playing, and reading to the child in the first and second and third years can build millions of brain connections and can build strong brains.

The neuron connection processes continue in very good ways after age four—but that process is most effective and most helpful in those very first months and years of life.

We can help all children be successful and we can help all children be learning ready when they get to kindergarten and to school if we talk, play, read, count, and sing to each child in those first key months and years after they are born. The biology is the same for children from every group. We need to help every child.

You can help your baby. Your baby needs you. You can make a huge difference in a wonderful way by just talking, reading and singing to your child. It is a lovely and loving thing to do, and it feels wonderful to do it.

***Each child is a miracle and a gift.
We need to be a gift and a miracle for each child.***



A message from the Institute for InterGroup Understanding
www.intergroupinstitute.org/books/three-key-years