

Jump Start Your Child's Future

5 Easy Steps for RAISING SMARTER KIDS





Baby Einstein videos, infant sign language, multilingual nannies, private preschools...

It seems children are expected to know more and more at a younger and younger age, and that parents are working harder and harder to increase their children's chances of success for achievement.

Success can come more easily and with less pressure than one might think.

To give your child the best foundation for future scholastic success – from elementary school through to college – find ways to foster your child's natural curiosity and encourage a love of learning at an early age. Start by following these 5 easy steps:

1

TALK to your baby



Children's school readiness is often defined by particular stages of language development. As a result, "baby talk" has become big business. Companies are promoting more and more products that claim to strengthen a child's language skills, often at a very early age. Baby sign-language programs and teach-your-baby-to-read programs each tout increased IQ scores and enhanced scholastic success.

However, research has shown that the most effective way that parents can increase their child's language development, vocabulary, school readiness and IQ is simply to talk to their baby, preferably about 30,000 words per day.

Talking to infants and preschool-aged children instills a significant language advantage that will persist throughout their entire educational lives. Children who are talked to the most during their first four years of life have higher IQs and do better in school, research has found, than children who are spoken to less.

What's important is not just the amount of words you utter in a day (although there's no such thing as "too much") but the kinds of things you talk about.



Evidence supports that chitchatting about your day – what you're doing and what's going on around you – increases your baby's vocabulary and language development faster than simple parental commands. This is likely due to the number of new words introduced during ordinary conversation. Many parental commands use the same words over and over, so baby isn't really learning anything new from command-speech.



Therefore, instead of worrying about what you're saying, just use your everyday vocabulary, speak in a clear voice, and talk talk talk away. Your child will quickly learn to follow and will respond with a much larger vocabulary than many children of the same age who don't receive as much talking attention. 💬



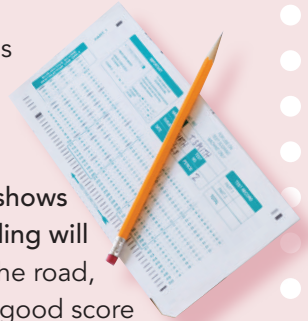
READ together

Experts and institutions such as the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that parents start reading aloud to their children daily while still in infancy. Many reading coaches and child development professionals recommend six months old as a start time, yet agree that it is never too early for a child to begin reaping the benefits of daily reading.



Reading aloud to your child improves his or her attention skills, builds vocabulary, stimulates the imagination, and provides opportunities for parent-child bonding and relaxation before bedtime.

In addition, reading aloud and independently has been shown to increase a child's empathy and perspective, important life skills that your child will need to succeed at school and later at work, as well as at home. Because reading aloud also shows your child that reading is important to you, reading will become important to your child as well. Down the road, your child will surely thank you upon receiving a good score on the verbal section of his or her college preparatory SAT exam.



So pick up a book, cuddle up with your child, and read on. 📖



3

TURN OFF the TV

Remember, turning off the television set means more time for family fun and for reading.



The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents avoid allowing children under the age of two to watch television.

Keep Baby Einstein videotapes and Sesame Street for later on.

- > For now, take your child for a walk through the park and name all of the animals and birds you see.
- > Or, take a trip to the library for children's story hour. Children need direct interaction with parents and other adults in order to build vocabulary, develop language skills, and thrive emotionally and socially in school.

Older toddlers and children over the age of three can benefit from certain educational television programs, but the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting TV viewing to no more than one to two hours per day. Use those hours wisely. Make sure your child is watching something that will benefit his or her cognitive development. TV stations such as Public Broadcasting (PBS) and those that specialize in nature and history programs are usually a good choice. ■





ASK questions


"Why?" is often among a child's favorite questions. And that's good. Research has shown that curious children have higher IQs than their less adventurous peers – as much as 12 points higher on average. Inquisitive kids also possess better reading skills and achieve greater academic success than their less curious peers.

To help nurture a child's innate curiosity, ask questions. "Why do you think that happened?" and "What would happen if you do this?" are great ways to engage your small child's attention and cognitive thought processes.



Even if your child is still too young to understand questions, be sure to incorporate questions into your daily talk chats with your child. As your child gets older, gradually increase the cognitive level of your questions.

- > "Why do you think she did that?" you might ask when your first grader comes home with hurt feelings.
- > "Why did the United States enter the Korean war?" you might query when your high-schooler studies world history.

It's important to engage your child's inquisitive nature while teaching critical thinking skills at the appropriate age level. 



Impart a LIFELONG love of learning



Love of learning is a strong motivator for scholastic success.

Children (and adults) are far more likely to continue the activity when they do it because they want to do it, not because they have to.

Love of learning is what will motivate your child to take advantage of educational opportunities throughout life, such as joining extracurricular activities, pursuing challenging hobbies, going to college, and traveling to distant shores.

By consistently engaging your child's curiosity, and letting your child follow the beat of his or her own interests, learning will become ever so much fun.








- > Take trips to museums together.
- > Fill your house with maps, globes, and pictures or artwork.
- > Take walks through the park with your child to explore nature.

A world of discovery awaits. ♥



GET STARTED NOW

Follow these 5 easy steps to help start your child on the path toward future achievement.

-  **Talk to your child in a meaningful way**
-  **Read aloud with your child**
-  **Turn off the TV and share an enriching activity**
-  **Ask your child age-appropriate questions to nurture curiosity**
-  **Lead by example . . . share your own love of learning by learning new things together**



By instilling a love of learning at an early age you can help lay the foundation for future educational achievement. How else can you jump start your child's future? **Start planning now for his or her college education.** With the current cost of a four year college degree ranging from \$60,000 to \$140,000*, the sooner you start saving, the better off you will be. Check out the **Gerber Life College Plan** for an easy way to save that provides guaranteed growth in value over time. Start saving now so that when it's time for college, you'll be ready.

*www.CollegeBoard.com



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Source:

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