

Ten Top Tips to help your child to explore and work things out for themselves



Children are born with a strong desire to learn. This learning is triggered and supported by the sorts of experiences they have and their relationships with others, especially parents and carers.

Two- and three-year olds are naturally curious and discover all sorts of problems in their daily lives. Given the right sort of support, children will deal with everyday challenges with great enthusiasm, energy, and excitement.



Here are some ways in which you can support your child.

- 1 Show them that you are interested in their play by commenting on what they have done and how they did it. Simply saying, 'Well done' is not always enough, e.g. 'Oh look, you've made a really tall tower.'
- 2 Provide your child with opportunities to make decisions and choose what they want to do, e.g. 'Which story shall we read?' 'Would you like the banana or the apple?'
- 3 Look for opportunities where you can talk and think about problems together, e.g. 'Where's your sock?' 'I wonder if it is under the bed?'
- 4 Encourage your child to do things for themselves. If they start to struggle give them just enough help to succeed.
- 5 Allow them to have uninterrupted time to play, limit noise and distractions, e.g. turn off the television. This will help them to concentrate and enjoy what they set out to do even more.
- 6 Learning that takes place when your child can use as many of their senses as possible is very powerful. It is okay to be messy and get dirty.
- 7 Encourage your child to have a go and to keep on trying even when things get difficult. Praise them for the way they did something rather than the end result.
- 8 When your child is proud of what they have done, let them know that you have noticed, e.g. 'You poured your own milk; you look really pleased.'
- 9 Say what you are thinking out loud when you yourself come across problems. That way your child hears what you are thinking, e.g. 'It's started to rain; I need to fetch the washing in'
- 10 Try not to ask too many questions. Use 'Who?' 'What?' and 'Where?'. Wait at least 10 seconds, this will give your child time to think and respond.