

Easy Things Parents Can Do To Benefit Their Child's Development



As busy people, we like easy! Parents can benefit their child's development in more ways than one, but you don't always have to use a lot of extra effort to make a huge difference. You'll be surprised what you can do by making a simple change here and there. You can really support learning at home. These tips and tricks will help your little one blossom into a pretty cool human. We could always use a little more awesomeness in this world.

Parents, Put Down the Tech

Don't get us wrong. Tech is impressive. It can make our lives easier, but you can get too much of a good thing. So, parents. Put down the phone. Eye contact, social interactions, and addressing your child face-to-face are completely irreplaceable when it comes to your little one picking up on communication skills that connects them with others. It doesn't matter if your little one is one month old or ten years old. This small action *moves mountains*. Children raised by parents who are frequently distracted by their phones TEND TO BECOME MORE NEGATIVE AND LESS RESILIENT in the long run. In a recent TED Talk, seven-year-old Molly Wright visually demonstrates the distress cell phone use can cause. It's okay to check your phone for updates and make calls, but when you're around your kiddo, unplug. You'll both reap the benefits of being present and focused with each interaction.



Understand Your Place as a Role Model

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. It's true. You are your child's very first guide in life. They learn to walk the walk and talk the talk from you. Children are **LIKELY TO REPEAT** what their parents do and say. This includes everything from future career choices to how they manage their time with technology. Setting down the phone can apply to this situation too. If you set down the phone, your child is more likely to follow your lead even as they grow older. Aside from that, becoming conscious about the words we use and how we talk about others makes a difference in your child's development. Try to take a moment each day to think of positive things to say about something or someone else. Thank your husband for cooking dinner and doing the dishes, for example. Speak with sincerity and make sure your little one can hear it. Kind words spread kindness, and your little one will pick up on that habit from their very first role model.

Eat as a Family

Eating as a family opens up a world of benefits for your child's development. We know. We know. It sounds too good to be true, but it's not. **EATING AS A FAMILY REDUCES** the risk of substance abuse, mental health problems, and eating disorders. Kids who frequently eat with their family often have higher resilience and self-esteem too. Plus, when you're at the table with those you love, you get an extra opportunity to connect and have conversations, which benefits your child's social development. Everyone in the family has to eat at some point, so be sure to spend at least a few nights a week eating as a family.



Name the Emotion

Teaching kids emotions can be tough. Let's face it. It's hard to put some complex feelings into words, especially as we grow and face new challenges. A little trick that can help your child learn about emotions and work through them is to simply name the emotion. It's easy, right? Naming emotions is powerful for your child's development. And, hey. It may help you too. When you name an emotion, it distances you from the emotion you're feeling. Simply put, you are not the emotion. In this way, this tip can lower the intensity of the emotion and make you or your kiddo more capable of facing an obstacle head-on. To help your child with this, ask them what emotions they are feeling in various situations. Help them name the emotion or say something like, "I see you are feeling sad. Let's talk about ways to help you feel less sad."

Drown Yourself in Words

Words are all around us, so take advantage of them! The more language the better for your child's development. Be sure to engage with your little ones by talking to them (even if they don't speak words back to you). Every opportunity or chance you get, tell them something new about life or their world. You can even sing or incorporate some STORYTIME to get in more practice with language and communication. Another word of advice? You, the parent, should be the teacher of language and not the TV, the tablet, or other tech device that offers language learning. Kids benefit far more from face-to-face interactions with you than they do from the device. For more information about using technology with kids in the early years, read our previous blog [HERE](#).



Stick to a Routine

Nobody is a routine master because let's face it. Life happens, and sometimes life happens hard. During those hard times, you'll be glad that you have a routine in place because routines help create feelings of safety and control. They help your child know what comes next in the day and help them make better TRANSITIONS. Building a routine means creating an environment where your child's development can thrive. If the current home routine can improve, start small. Maybe you organize a clearer routine just for the evening such as homework comes before play and play comes before dinner and dinner comes before wind-down time. Consistently practicing your family routine can get your child on the path toward learning and growing.

Move More

Less sitting. More moving. Whatever ways you can find to help your kiddo move more, do it! Movement can improve your child's balance, endurance, and core strength. Plus, movement reduces BACK PAIN and allows your child to practice their gross motor skills. Open the door to a few more movement opportunities during the day. Maybe you take a 5-10 minute break between homework assignments to just move. Maybe you swap some videogame time for an evening walk with your child. Make this tip work with your schedule and your kiddo by taking a small step. You don't need to start at an hour. Even just an extra five minutes a day can get you on the consistency train, which will allow you to be able to work up to bigger goals later on.



There's always room for improvement, so take these tips and make them work for you and your unique schedule. If you notice that your child is struggling to reach movement, language, or behavioral goals, REACH OUT to us today.

Craving more handy tips? Our FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM pages bring the party with exclusive information that can help you and your child learn and grow. Plus, we're loads of fun!