



## Playing to Learn

Children learn best when they have choices, and when they are encouraged to follow their interest and have fun! To promote learning and brain growth in babies, toddlers, and preschoolers, we must help them learn through play.

When we sing to our babies, read to them, or expose them to any new experience, we are growing their brain. The next time we sing that nursery rhyme or read that story, your baby's brain will start to remember it!

### How can I help my baby learn and grow?

1. If you really believe that play is important, let your actions speak loud! Open your home to play, schedule activities around play, and let your baby have playdates.
2. Provide materials that stimulate play. Toys and materials that allow your child to explore are great—almost anything can be a toy! Use plastic containers with dry rice and beans to make music (be mindful of choking hazards). Use paper towel rolls to look through or make art.
3. Don't waste money on toys that have only one use. A toy that needs a battery to work usually makes your child to be less creative, and is less exciting than a cardboard box or blocks.
4. Remember, there are learning opportunities everywhere you look! Take advantage of everyday moments to grow your baby's brain.
5. Avoid toys or programs that teach babies to memorize facts. Children learn best when they learn through experience and understand things in real ways. Learning facts on their own does not build children's brains and can overwhelm them.