

Tips for Parents

Turn off the TV

Every research study shows that there is absolutely no benefit in TV viewing for children under 3 years of age. No baby can turn on a television set so please don't do it for them.

Many parents say that their baby enjoys certain shows. This is not true. Babies have a physiological reflex called the 'Orienting Response' which draws them to flickering lights and rapid movement. Television programmes take advantage of this by using rapid image changes and bright colours to appeal to young children. A baby isn't relating to a character or show, but is responding to the moving lights.

Many parents have been convinced that TV shows will make their children more intelligent. Pretty much all research on cognitive development and intelligence in infants proves that this is not the case. What has been proven is that in order to boost intelligence, the following activities are more far valuable than TV ever will be:



- Playing with your child
- Talking with your baby
- Loving, physical contact
- Smiling at your baby
- Allowing them time to talk/babble at you
- Eye contact
- Laughter
- Creating a predictable routine

Best of all, the things that are proven to improve intelligence and create happy children are FREE!

Preparing for Life urges parents and guardians to turn off the TV, get on the floor and interact with your children. You will be rewarded in the long run and your children will thank you.

Enjoy your baby

- Take time to enjoy being a parent.
- Play with your baby and have fun. Play gentle games like peek-a-boo and show them how to enjoy simple pleasures.
- Hold your baby, sing to them, rock them and cuddle them.
- Go for walks and talk to them.
- Do not be afraid to show love for your child; remember it's always the small things that count – a smile, a hug or just being with your baby.
- They grow and change quickly so enjoy every moment.



Don't argue, problem solve

Children are incredibly sensitive to the moods of their parents and they pick up far more information than adults give them credit for. Children are natural worriers, concerned for the welfare of the people that they care about.

When parents argue in front of their children it can cause distress and disturbance. Children look to adults to show them how behave and how to manage their emotions. When children experience a chaotic environment it is much more difficult for them to feel secure and to manage their feelings.

If you are having an argument with your partner, please consider that what may seem trivial to you can have a strong effect on your child. Shouting, yelling, name calling and violence in front of your child is not healthy and can scare them.

However, showing your child ways of expressing themselves in a safe and healthy way can be empowering. Parents have the ability to teach their child how to solve problems and resolve disputes by showing them how to compromise, sacrifice and agree to disagree.

