



Experiences That Can Strengthen Your Child's Development

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Children begin to develop critical learning skills at a young age that will help them be successful later in life; therefore, it is important for parents to provide opportunities for their children to work on these skills throughout early childhood. Learning opportunities will prepare children with the foundation necessary for success at school. Below are some simple ideas that will promote the development of skills included in the five EYE-TA domains.

A) Awareness of Self and Environment

1) **Dress for Success:** Ask your child to select their clothing and dress themselves with minimal help. Discuss what they picked and whether or not it is an appropriate choice for the weather and occasion.



2) **Emotions Song:** "If you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap) x 2 etc." Add other verses using appropriate actions and expressions (e.g., mad/stomp; surprised/jump; scared/hide).

3) **Find Teddy:** To work on your child's concept of positions (e.g., front/back; top/bottom; over/under), place his or her teddy bear in different locations and ask your child to describe where Teddy is.



B) Cognitive Skills

1) **Cheerio Math:** During snack time ask your child to count his or her food items. For example, ask your child to make groups or sets using Cheerios - demonstrate how to do this first if necessary.



2) **Alphabet Song:** Sing the alphabet regularly with your child. Once he or she has mastered all the letter names, match the names with the written letter and introduce the sounds that these letters make.

3) **Storybook Reading:** Read with your child early and often. Ensure that your child is engaged throughout the story by drawing his or her attention to the book and asking questions.



C) Language and Communication

1) **Walk & Talk:** During a walk with your child, make an effort to ask him or her questions about what he or she sees, hears and smells. Find objects along the way that will help promote discussion.



2) **Re-tell it:** After reading a book with your child, ask him or her to re-tell the story. Similarly, after your child has finished watching a television program, ask him or her to summarize it for you.

3) **Word of the Day:** Select a new word each day to describe and use it in a daily activity. For example: House - discuss what it is, who lives in it, look in books to find house pictures, and play a game of house.



D) Physical Development

1) **Arts & Crafts Corner:** Taking time to make crafts with your child (e.g., colouring, painting, cutting, etc.) will not only help your child to develop fine motor skills, but it will also stimulate his or her creativity!



2) **Outdoor Games:** Ample space to move around and fresh air provide a perfect opportunity to enhance your child's gross motor skills through play-based activities such as tag, hopscotch, catch, soccer, etc.

3) **Watch then Do:** Instead of completing challenging physical tasks for your child (e.g., pouring a drink, brushing teeth, etc.), first model the behavior and then encourage your child to attempt it.



E) Social Skills and Approaches to Learning



1) **Let's make friends:** Provide your child with opportunities to build friendships with other children their age. If your child is shy, they may need your extra support while making new friends.

2) **Encourage peaceful conflict resolution:** Help your child to understand that conflict has two sides. Allow your child to offer suggestions for solving the conflict and if they do not offer suggestions, provide some. Help your child to choose a solution and make sure they follow through.



3) **Be positive and consistent:** Acknowledge and reward your child when you notice appropriate behavior (e.g., using good manners, playing well with a friend). Help your child understand why limits are necessary. Set clear limits. Enforce them consistently.