

Nurturing Your Child's Creativity

Provide opportunities for your child to pursue his/her own interests. Children will be most creative when intrinsically motivated, and intrinsic motivation comes from working on something that is important to one's self.

Put more emphasis on ideas and questions than answers.

Respect, accept and delight in unusual ideas, unique directions or outlandish questions.

Provide a variety of enriching and exciting resources for stimulating ideas and imagination.

Allow time for daydreaming, playing, experimenting, testing and questions. Children need time to explore ideas without the pressure to "get the right answer" or produce a product.

Be cautious in editing children's creative products. Don't always immediately correct your child's mistakes by telling what the correct answer should be or how something must be done.

Allow your child to be different! For example, if he/she wants to put barbecue sauce on green beans, refrain from commenting that the two don't go well together. If a child consistently gets the message that there is a specific, correct way to do everything, it limits the ability to imagine other possibilities.

Encourage your child to take a different look at things. There are many things one can learn about the world by standing on one's head!

Encourage true individuality. Find little details about your child's work or behavior that show him/her as a special person.

Encourage your child to play with words. Use word games, such as rhymes, opposites and puns, to their full advantage. Add verses to songs and experiment with changing the lyrics to favorite songs.

Provide opportunities for your child to sense problems and create possible solutions. Ask "what if" questions that require your child to ponder something that hasn't happened, rather than trivia questions that ask for a specific answer.