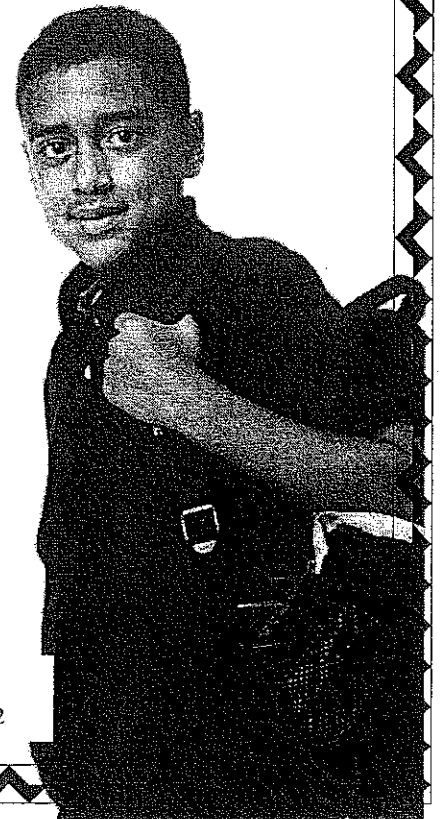


Supporting Your Child's Learning

Parent handouts

Revised December 2013



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Child development stages Brain development

Researchers are now studying each gender's development separately and discovering that boys and girls face very different sorts of challenges.

Boys	Girls
<p>0–3 years</p> <p>At birth, boys have brains that are 5% larger than girls' (size doesn't affect intelligence) and proportionately larger bodies—disparities that increase with age.</p>	<p>0–3 years</p> <p>Girls are born with a higher proportion of nerve cells to process information. More brain regions are involved in language production and recognition.</p>
<p>4–6 years</p> <p>The start of school is a tough time as boys must curb aggressive impulses. They lag behind girls in reading skills, and hyperactivity may be a problem.</p>	<p>4–6 years</p> <p>Girls are well-suited to school. They are calm, get along with others, pick up on social cues, and reading and writing come easily to them.</p>
<p>7–10 years</p> <p>While good at gross motor skills, boys trail girls in fine motor control. Many of the best students, but also nearly all of the poorest ones, are boys.</p>	<p>7–10 years</p> <p>Very good years for girls. On average, they outperform boys at school, excelling in verbal skills while holding their own in math.</p>
<p>11–13 years</p> <p>A mixed bag. Dropout rates begin to climb, but good students start pulling ahead of girls in math skills and catching up some in verbal ones.</p>	<p>11–13 years</p> <p>The start of puberty and girls' most vulnerable time. Many experience depression; as many as 15% may try to kill themselves.</p>
<p>14–16 years</p> <p>Entering adolescence, boys hit another rough patch. Indulging in drugs, alcohol, and aggressive behaviour are common forms of rebellion.</p>	<p>14–16 years</p> <p>Eating disorders are a major concern. Although anorexia can manifest itself as early as 8, it typically afflicts girls starting at 11 or 12; bulimia at 15.</p>

Learning styles

1. Visual learner

- needs and likes to visualise things
- learns through images—can remember the pictures on a page
- enjoys art and drawing
- reads maps, charts and diagrams well
- interested in machines and inventions
- plays with Lego and other construction toys, and likes jigsaw puzzles.
- can be a daydreamer in class.



2. Kinaesthetic learner

- processes knowledge through physical sensations
- highly active, not able to sit still long
- communicates using body language and gestures
- shows you rather than tells you
- wants to touch and feel the world around them
- may be good at mimicking others
- enjoys sports or other activities where they can keep moving.



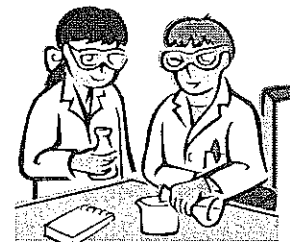
3. Auditory learner

- thinks in words and verbalizes concepts
- spells words accurately and easily, as they can hear the different sounds—so tends to learn phonetically rather than through “look and say” techniques
- can be a good reader, though some prefer the spoken word
- has excellent memory for names, dates and trivia
- likes word games
- enjoys using tape recorders and often musically talented
- usually able to learn times tables with relative ease.



4. Logical learner

- thinks conceptually, likes to explore patterns and relationships
- enjoys puzzles and seeing how things work
- constantly questions and wonders
- likes routine and consistency
- capable of highly abstract forms of logical thinking at an early age
- does mental arithmetic easily
- enjoys strategy games, computers and experiments with a purpose
- creates own designs to build with blocks/Lego
- not so good at the more “creative” side.



Suggestions for encouraging four types of thinking

1. Visual learner

- use board games and memory games to create visual patterns
- suggest visual clues when reading together—let your child “paint” their own mind pictures as they read the story
- offer picture books of all types, even as they get older
- encourage visualisation of story and reinforce this at intervals
- encourage writing through using different colours of writing paper or writing tools
- teach “mind mapping” techniques to older children, to help them learn and recall complex information
- show videos of plays, films etc., to reinforce the stories they are studying.



2. Kinaesthetic learner

- movement helps these children—allow them to move around after a time while studying
- chewing gum, being able to doodle or fiddle with something like beads, or squeeze toys, can help them concentrate
- use hands-on activities and experiments, art projects, nature walks or acting out stories, so they “feel” the activities
- avoid things they don’t like—long-range planning, complicated projects, paper-and-pencil tasks, workbooks.



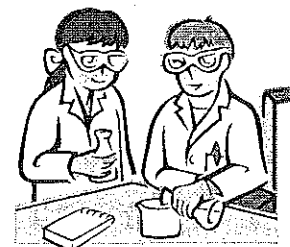
3. Auditory learner

- encourage them to create their own word problems
- get them to dictate a story to you and watch while you write/type it out
- read aloud together and record session for later playback
- buy or borrow auditory books
- record information digitally.



4. Logical learner

- do science experiments together and get them to record the results
- use computer learning games in all subject areas and word puzzles
- introduce non-fiction, poetry, and rhyming books.



Tips for parents

All ages

- Be available to your child—spend more time with your child than he/she seems to think is necessary. Create special adult-child time together.
- Talk, share, celebrate family history and events (connect to what child is learning at school).
- Be aware of your son's or daughter's learning strengths and weaknesses.
- Communicate with your child's teacher(s) as to how you can support his/her education (learning, class success).
- Participate in the school community at the class or school level.
- Be consistent with discipline and be aware of where home and school expectations match and differ.
- Be aware of, and participate with your child's engagement in online activities and community activities.
- As child ages, provide opportunity for choice and responsibility in homework, studying and learning routines to reinforce student ownership of learning.
- Model and support your child's planning for homework including daily tasks, short term projects and longer term.
- Encourage family and peer activities involving cause/effect relationships, vocabulary development, numeracy, and co-operative/collaborative tasks.
- Support curiosity in going deeper in school related topics by modeling the desire to learn more and how to access additional information.
- Praise effort, engagement, and progress as learning is contingent upon taking risks into the unknown.

	Primary	Intermediate	Middle Secondary	Secondary
Learning Styles				
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities to play with your child. • Read to your child daily, and then let them read to you. • Encourage students to describe/tell what they have read. • Model reading for enjoyment. • Explore different forms of written resources including print. • Encourage child to learn new words and use them in daily activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model reading for enjoyment and information. • Provide opportunity for authentic writing activities such as thank-you notes, cards, letters, emails, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model reading for enjoyment and information. • Include a wide variety of non-fiction sources including text, graphic, and video sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model reading for enjoyment and information. • Learn about the subject specific vocabulary and literary terms and relate to non-academic reading materials. • Encourage students to be aware of language suitable for different audiences.
Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish daily routines to share events/learning from their day. • Establish daily routines to support school's communications routines, e.g., planners, back and forth books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review day's work and homework expectations. • Provide support, space, and materials necessary for work completion. • Assist in summarizing/note taking/highlighting of materials. • Help make connections between new learning concepts and past learning experiences. • Encourage use of graphic organizers. • Encourage construction of sample test questions to review course materials. • Encourage collaboration with classmate/peer for study. • Provide access to research resources such as internet and library access. • Encourage discussion/sharing of what student is learning with friends and family. 		
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce math concepts with games and concrete materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce math lessons. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing money—living within your means. • Model a positive attitude towards the use of math within daily life and career possibilities.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active with your child in their use of computers and other electronics. • Be active in the selection of TV and videos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active with your child in their use of computers and other electronics. • Be active in the selection of TV and videos. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify school and home expectations for acceptable use of mobile devices in school, for communication, research, and other learning tasks. • Model and encourage child to make responsible choices for access to media, especially when in mixed age groups.
Social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review with your child school and classroom expectations and responsibilities. • Establish communication and language around bullying and peer communication. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with your child differences between expectations of teachers and school officials and help them respectfully communicate with school. • Let no topic of conversation be off-limits.

Background Information

Supporting Your Child's Learning Bibliography/Internet Resource List

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Alberta Teachers' Association: <http://www.teachers.ab.ca/Resources+For/Parents/>

Alfie Kohn articles, etc.: <http://www.alfiekohn.com/articles.htm>

BCTF Parent Page information: <http://www.bctf.ca/parents.aspx>

National Association of School Psychologists: <http://www.naspccenter.org/resourcekit>

National Education Association (U.S.). *Help for Parents*. Accessed: May 18, 2004.
<http://www.nea.org/home/ParentPartnershipResources.html>

The Parent Institute. *Parenting Series: 25 Ways Parents Can...* Fairfax, VA: The Parent Institute, 2002.
<http://www.parent-institute.com/welcome.php>

BBC Home—Schoolgate—Help from Home
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/schoolgate/helpfromhome/content/2howchildrenlearn.shtml>

When helping your child read at home, several strategies may be used to aid in decoding unknown words.

1. Tell the child to look at the picture. You may tell the child the word is something that can be seen in the picture, if that is the case.
2. Tell the child to look for chunks in the word, such as *it* in sit, *at* in mat, or *and* and *ing* in standing.
3. Ask the child to get his/her mouth ready to say the word by shaping the mouth for the beginning letter.
4. Ask the child if the word looks like another word s/he knows. Does *bed* look like *red*?, for example.
5. Ask the child to go on and read to the end of the sentence. Often by reading the other words in context, the child can figure out the unknown word.
6. If the child says the wrong word while reading, ask questions like:

Does it make sense?

Does it sound right?

Does it look right?

