

BRIGHT BABY

For all of you excited expectant Moms, like myself, who are sifting and reading through tons of baby magazines and journals to get as much information as possible, I've got some ideal suggestions for you!

Confirming the latest research again, Dr. Roni Leiderman makes it quite clear that "Your baby is born ready to learn, and how much your baby learns depends on you." No pressure here! Dr. Leiderman has identified in her studies that a baby's brain is fully developed at birth, but what will change is its actual structure. The structure of your child's brain will change based on his or her experiences. Through her studies, she has determined that babies who were not exposed to various stimulating experiences, within their first 18 months of life, had brains approximately 20-30% smaller than those who had such experiences. The latest research on babies brains has proven that proper stimulation during your child's first three years enhances brain development and the likelihood of their brain reaching its fullest potential. Dr. Leiderman and leading researchers suggest the following ways to help our babies achieve:

- From the moment your baby is born; hold, rock, talk to, and play with him lovingly and often.
- Whether your child is at home, in child care, or at a friend or family member's home make sure that she is safe, lovingly nurtured, and stimulated.
- Assist your baby in exploring his or her interests. He may show interest in a particular object nearby and want to hold it.
- During your child's very significant first year of life, carry on babbling conversations, in which he or she is explaining the world to you as he or she sees it.
- Play music and sing to your baby often. Classical music and repetitive soothing lullabies are found to be especially stimulating and comforting to most babies.
- Cue into your child's developmental level as she learns during those first three years. Understand which games, books, and type of play is most appropriate for her, so that she does not become frustrated from something too advanced or from something below her skill level. During the second and third year, your child will continue to enjoy books, music, and especially conversations with you!
- Children learn through play. Give them lots of opportunities for play and discovery, which will in turn become a stimulant and nurturer of the brain like no other. Provide your child with props, such as building blocks, leggos, and farm animals and witness his imagination soar.
- Your child needs opportunities to play with others to develop socially. Children learn to develop strategies which assist them in forming friendships, as well as dealing with unfair situations.

Stimulating your child with all of these suggestions, especially during the first three years is without a doubt one of the most important things you can do for him or her. Just remember one more thing. . . without confusing you any further on what to do and what not to do, I want to share with you that I have also discovered research that reminds parents not to be concerned if your child gets bored once in a while. By just hanging out sometimes she begins to discover the little lady bug crawling along the patio and it's vibrant red color. She will begin to discover that the leaves make natural music when the wind combs the tree's branches. They begin to discover life on their own and in magnificently beautiful ways.