

Developing the Mind with Educational Baby Toys

In recent years, many parents have questioned whether educational baby toys really work in stimulating and developing a small child's mind. For anyone interested in learning more and trying to find out if toys such as these are worth the money - research is always best.

We wanted to provide you with information that will help you gain a better understanding of how a baby learns, as well as the types of things they learn from birth on.

Animals in the wild become independent very early on but newborn babies depend on mom and dad for many years. Obviously, these years are a time of exploration and learning. After all, children are naturally curious so they want to figure out how everything in this big world works. As children grow into teenagers and then adults, the things learned will be what they survive on, which includes messages within the brain and the five senses.

For example, a newborn has a small and undeveloped brain. However, within the first 12 months of life, the brain will grow from about 30% of full adult size to 60%. With the baby's brain growing 50% larger than when born, you can only imagine the vast amount of information being learned and retained. Therefore, it is important to provide your baby with educational stimulation for healthy growth and development.

With the actual size of the brain growing so quickly, the potential for your baby to learn is astounding but for the best development, again the brain must be stimulated.

Look at it this way, your baby's brain is similar to a muscle. For the muscle to grow big and strong, it must be exercised. The brain is the same way and as it becomes larger, it develops a larger number of neurons, which are also known as nerve cells. Similar to electrical wires, when the baby is first born, there is no wire connection. Over time, strong circuits are created, which is what allows a human being to think, understand, process, and coordinate physical movements. The way these connections are made and become more secure is with outside stimulation such as sights and sounds found in everyday life.

The key is that the more the brain is stimulated the more neuron connections develop. The more nerve cells connect and fire, the more brain power the child will have. Therefore, in answer to the question regarding educational toys and their effectiveness in stimulating a child's mind, yes, they do help a child become more intellectual.

Okay, so now you probably want to know what type of stimulation works best. The answer is that anything that involves the child's five senses would be beneficial. These senses include:

1. **Sight** – When first born, babies do not see well but offering them brightly colored objects such as rattle, bottle, or other age-appropriate educational toys are the perfect choice.

2. **Sound** – Babies hear quite well at birth, responding to all types of noises but the best sounds for stimulation would be wind chimes, classical music, and lullabies.
3. **Touch** – Babies love touch, which helps them feel warm and secure but as the baby begins to reach for or touch objects, choose items with texture and bright colors. Not only is the child learning eye-hand coordination and better gripping skills, he or she is being stimulated mentally by the different materials used.
4. **Smell and Taste** – Although baby toys for smell are not available, once your baby begins experimenting with solid foods, offer the baby different foods and flavors, which is a type of stimulation. Just as with taste, you will simply need to provide your child with the chance to try different foods, allowing him or her to learn what foods are preferred.

The bottom line is that educational baby toys made by reputable manufacturers do in fact work. Using toys such as this stimulate the mind, resulting in a better developed child. However, along with toys, the most important thing a baby needs is cuddling time with mom and dad. For a well-balanced child, the key is lots of love, holding, and kissing, coupled with stimulation from educational toys.