

10 Easy Ways to Make Children Smarter

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Scientific research shows that intelligence is both genetic and environmental. Intelligence is also not fixed but can be increased because the brain develops new neurons and interconnections with stimulation.

A supportive environment fosters numerous aspects of intelligence. The following 10 easy ways to stimulate intelligence in children will provide an "enriched environment" for brain growth.

#1 Love and Self-Esteem Improve Academic Performance

In a long series of experiments, Prescott Lecky, an American educational researcher, found a high correlation between low self-esteem and learning problems in children.

He correctly theorized that by raising a child's self-esteem, learning performance would also improve.

His success stories include a poor speller who averaged 55 in six months, a Latin student who went from 30 after three encouraging conversations with a teacher, and a student considered to have no aptitude for English who improved over a semester to win the school's literary prize.

#2 Breast Fed Babies Are Smarter

Danish researchers found that mother's milk contained essential micronutrients for brain development. In fact, the longer the child was breast fed, the more the brain was nourished. For example, infants breast fed for 9 months were smarter than infants only breast-fed for two months.

#3 Proper Nutrition Improve Health and Nerve Conduction

Diets high in sugar, trans fatty acids, and salt decreased health in children. Junk food failed to provide sufficient iron for healthy brain development, resulting in poor nerve impulses. Children with nutritional deficiency also missed school more often because of illness and fell behind their peers.

#4 Proper Breakfast Improves Attention At School

Thirty years of research has shown a strong correlation between breakfast and mental alertness. Children who had nutritious breakfasts had better memory. They also concentrated better and absorbed more information during class. Those who had no breakfast or poor breakfast were more irritable and distracted during class.

#5 Exercise Benefits Intelligence and Personality

Research conducted by the University of Illinois showed that fitter children performed better academically. Besides the obvious physiological benefits of improved oxygen intake, blood flow, immune stimulation, and neural transmission, there was also a psychological and sociological component, too. Psychologically, fitter children showed higher self-esteem.

Sociologically, those who participated in organized sports displayed more confidence, more cooperation, and spontaneous leadership.

#6 Musical Training Improves IQ into Adulthood

Long-term research by the University of Toronto showed that organized music lessons benefited children all the way into adulthood. The longer the child studied music, the higher their IQs as adults. Music students also displayed better grades throughout their schooling.

#7 Some Video Games Enhance Mental Acuity

Research by the University of Rochester found that certain video games improved sensory perception, strategic thinking, and planning ahead of time. The video games that created positive mental improvements had an educational element that improved motor skills and enhanced memory.

#8 Mind Games Do More Than Entertain

Board games like chess, checkers, creative games like Lego and jigsaw puzzles, and brainteaser games like crosswords, cryptograms, riddles, and Sudoku improved intelligence. Specifically, they stimulated better decision-making, smarter analytical thinking, and more accurate problem solving.

#9 Reading Improves Both Creativity and Logic

Whether a child was read to at bedtime, or actively read their own books, silently or aloud, they displayed increased left and right brain intellectual growth. Both fiction and non-fiction books improved creative imagination and logical, sequential thinking.

#10 Nurturing Curiosity Creates an Open, Absorbent Mind

Curiosity, the urge to seek knowledge, is essential to improving intelligence in children. Conducting educational outings, teaching new skills, and supporting hobbies encouraged the development of curiosity.

These 10 ways of raising intelligence in children are easy to apply, practical, and within the reach of parents and teachers. Research has shown that they are highly effective in creating the environmental support children need to develop their intelligence.