



Educational Toys Versus You; Who Can Grow Your Child's Brain Better?

“A two-dimensional screen can never replace a real environment, rich in all five senses.”

-Paul, Pamela, “Parenting Inc., c. 2008, quoting Alvin Poussaint, a child psychiatrist and director of the media center of Judge Baker’s Children Center in Boston, p.128.

Are you confused by the tons of toys that beckon you from the “educational” toy aisle? Are you tempted to build your child’s future school success from the likes of an amphibian? Or, wonder if the funny-looking reading bunnies might help?

Dimitri Christakis, director of the University of Washington’s Child Health Institute, says that learning programs via computers, TV and videos do a poor job of teaching your child’s brain. He warns us to be aware of the “video deficit” — when it takes a video or software program say six exposures to teach your child what you could easily do in just one simple demonstration.

Additionally, Christakis says these mediums teach your child’s brain to expect an unusually high and unrealistic level of stimulation when compared with real-life experiences such as reading or listening to his classroom teacher. In effect, these gizmos train your child to be bored with you and school!

Esther Jantzen, a veteran literacy advocate in the Los Angeles urban school system, begs parents to rethink literacy. She says that literacy education needs to start from words heard and words used. So, the critical piece in developing literacy is *you* talking to your child. It’s not the school, and it’s not *Sesame Street*. It’s also *now*; not later in a school or learning center.

Literacy starts from words heard and words used. So, the critical piece in developing literacy is *you* conversing with your child.

-Esther Jantzen

David Perlmutter, pediatrician, neurologist and author of *The Better Brain Book*,

tells us that high tech toys don't take advantage of what the brain is designed for—learning from others in real-life situations.

High-tech programs keep your child in a passive, poorly-engaged brain state. Don't be fooled. Glitzy, beeping, "educational" toys will never take the place of your voice as you chat with your child each and every day. Brain research shows that *you* are your child's best teacher!



Research is clear—your child's brain grows the best when *you* talk and read to your child.