

KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT



You are your child's first teacher.

No parent knows everything about children or is a “perfect parent.” An understanding of parenting strategies and child development helps parents understand what to expect and how to provide what children need during each developmental phase. All parents can benefit from increasing their knowledge and understanding of child development.

Things to think about:

- What does your child do best and what do you like about your child?
- What do you like about parenting? What do you find challenging about parenting?
- How have you learned about parenting skills?
- How do you continue to learn about your child's development?
- What has helped you learn about yourself as a parent?
- Are there things that worry you about your child's development or behavior?
- Have other people expressed concern about your child?

Hey Families! You Got This!!

Get free support delivered to your phone! When you sign up for Bright by Text, you'll receive 2-4 text messages per week to support your child's learning and development. Plus, you'll hear about family-friendly events happening in **Gratiot and Isabella Counties**. Text the word “YouGotThis” to 274448 to get started today.



Below are reliable sites to get information about child development, but first, keep these things in mind!

1. Just because your parents did it with you, does not mean that it worked! In fact, this may be the reason you have an issue or struggle with a behavior your child displays, because you only know what you know. Look into a new way of handling a behavior by checking out one of the sites below.
2. There are many common parenting issues. Sometimes connecting with other parents who have children with the same age and are going through the same struggles helps you feel like you are not alone with the struggle and may even help you to think outside of the box for new solutions.
3. The first 3 years of your child's life are the largest years for brain development. Remember this:
4. Have realistic expectations for your child. You don't expect your child to be born fully able to talk. Look into what are reasonable expectations for a child's age. And remember! These are only guidelines, all babies and children develop at their own rate. If you are concerned about your baby/child's development contact your local Build UP Michigan program (989) 330-0568, Tanya Metcalf. They can help you figure out if there is something you can do to help your child's development.

HEART:

H = Hug – chemicals are released in the brain that speed up connections in the brain. You can never hold your child too much.

E = Engage – screen time slows down brain development. By interacting with your child in back and forth activities (When an infant or young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child's brain that support the development of communication and social skills. Much like a lively game of tennis, volleyball, or Ping-Pong,) This is call Serve and return.

A = Ask – Ask your child questions. Even if they can't talk yet, asking questions gets the wheels in their brain turning.

R = Read – Reading to your child everyday even as an infant provides a quiet time to interact. Even if you make up a story to pictures, your child will enjoy it. This helps your child to stimulate their imagination and helps them to get ready to read for later in life. If you are reading, begin to model pointing at the words and how you move from left to right on the page.

T = Talk – Your newborn won't be able to talk for a while, but the more you talk to them, the sooner they will learn. Talk about everything you do during the day while you are with them. Changing diapers, feeding meals, giving a bath.. Talk about colors, sounds, shapes, why you are doing what you are doing, what you are going to do next.

Great resources to get more parenting strategies and child development information:

ZERO TO THREE - <https://www.zerotothree.org/>

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/index.html>

MSU EXTENSION - https://www.canr.msu.edu/early_childhood_development/parent-education/

HEART VIDEO - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpeBlz1ec18>

BUILD UP MICHIGAN - <https://www.buildupmi.org/>

MI KIDS MATTER - https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/0,9220,7-376-101357_101418---,00.html



Open your camera and focus it on the image above to get a link to a short video.