

---

---

# Parents and Young Children

— Together at Home —

---

---

# Parent and Child: The Dynamic Duo



# Setting the stage: Young children and their parents

A dynamic duo is described as two people often paired together whose unique traits, when combined, usually result in success or otherwise positive results. I think this describes the parent/child relationship and for the purposes of homeschooling/homeworking, it's this relationship that will set your child up for joyful learning.

## What we know about two and three year olds

Two and three year olds are filled with boundless energy, curiosity, competency, and determination. Their world is a big place and they are eager to understand the things in their world through authentic sensory experiences.

# Parents: You are rock stars

Our 2 and 3 year olds are using their language to express their ideas, likes, and dislikes and to ask, sometimes over and over again, “why”. They are beginning to think logically and problem-solve.

Our 2 and 3 year olds want to feel like “big kids” and are eager to take on “adult tasks” to show us how big they really are. They are in awe of all things adult and look up to us as their mentors and role models!

## What we know about Parents: You are Rock Stars

You are in a unique position to create meaningful learning experiences with your child (even as you are multitasking in this once in a lifetime new reality called Homeschooling and Homeworking).

# The good news

Learning is a two way street and we learn best when we are in relationship with others. You and your child have been in an intimate relationship since the day your child was born. You are primed to listen and attend to your child in the same way your child is primed to listen and attend to you.

According to your child, you have everything going for you-you are smart, curious, a problem-solver, funny, talented, creative, musical, and more. With all these skills in your court, you are already a certified teacher.

**The good news:** You have worlds of experience implementing ideas and making meaning of the world. Your 2 or 3 year is just learning how to connect the dots between what they know and don't know and how to carry-out the many ideas in their head. You can help them bring their ideas to life.

# In your home, you are providing

1. A safe and stimulating environment to learn and grow.
2. Opportunities to communicate, think, and problem-solve.
3. Time and space to play independently (free play/dramatic play).
4. A daily schedule that fits your child's developmental needs
5. Social-Emotional support
6. Connections to family and friends
7. Outdoor adventures/Gross motor activities
8. Exposure to diverse learning experiences

# Home and School: Shared Goals



**As educators and parents our goals for your children are the same, regardless of the setting. What we strive to provide for your child in the school environment is the same as what you strive to provide for your child at home. At the heart of it all is the child's perspective. In the words of a child:**

**“If I can ask my own questions, try out my ideas, experiences what’s around me, share what I find; If I have plenty of time for my special pace, a nourishing space, things to transform;**

**If you’ll be my patient friend, trusted guide, fellow investigator, partner in learning; then I will explore the world, discover my voice, and tell you what you want to know in a hundred languages.**

**Pamela Houk (Foundations PSNC)**

# Connection, Collaboration, and Curiosity

Dan J. Siegel, author of the Whole Brain Child and The Yes Brain states that “engaging with our kids in ways that involve connection, curiosity, and collaboration is a key to both play and helping the brain to grow well.” And, “if you are playing a game of Scrabble and exploring words, taking part in a game of ping-pong or even the old-fashioned game of cards, having fun during the experience can be a key to enjoying the time rather than seeing it as a chore.”

**This way of engaging-connection, curiosity, and collaboration- are what we share as educators and parents**

# Everyday materials and a growing brain



# Provocations and Materials

**Provocations:** Early Childhood defines provocations as. “deliberate and thoughtful decisions made by the teacher to extend the ideas of the children. Teachers provide materials, media, and general direction as needed, but the children take the ideas where they want.

**Why materials/provocations?**

1. Young children are competent learners and now is the time to expose them to complex, stimulating, and joyful experiences.
2. Materials stimulate the senses. “The combination of hand and materials is essential to virtually every endeavor.”
3. In relationship with responsive adults, materials, the environment, and ideas, children learn how to focus their attention on tasks/projects of their choice.

# Materials, Connections, and Joy

**“The point of every activity is to build relationships, not fill time. Most important is for you and your child to share time together with wonder, joy, and laughter”. (21)**

**“If a child plays with materials in the first 3 years, her mind will be full of things to do with them.”**

**“Doing, for the pure joy of doing, not to make a particular thing, is the work and play of infants and toddlers”**

# Seeing the world through your child's eyes

**This way of learning, exploring will not be new to your child. In the classroom, we use provocations to jump start conversations about specific topics, holidays, and to introduce new materials. It's as simple as putting the material/object/book in a space that is visible to the children and then just wait. We will quietly observe and listen as the children manipulate, play with, think about the provocation and based on their ideas/thoughts, can guide the exploration through open-ended questions. This technique can also be done at home.**

# Materials Here, There, and Everywhere

As we spend more of our time in our homes and neighborhoods, it's a great time to rummage through closets, cabinets, drawers, basement, backyards, parks, and the woods for materials. Not only will you get some much needed cleaning done (as you make a mess in the process), your child will no doubt find materials that he/she wants to use, in some creative way, in his /her play or art.

Look around and see what you can find. Materials are a wonderful provocation to jump start your child's creativity and imagination

These are the basics, but you can definitely expand your list based on what you find in your home. The possibilities are endless.

# A Dream list of Materials

Aluminum, Paper, Bottles, Boxes, Bubble wrap, Greeting cards, Cardboard tubes, CD's, Cereal containers, clipboard, Clips, Coffee Filters, Containers, Costume jewelry, Cupcake papers, Envelopes, Fabric, Game pieces, Gift wrap, Glue, Hair ties, Jar tops, Keys, Lace doilies, Parchment paper, Sponges, Paper (of all types and thickness, size, color, blank, lined, embossed, and patterned), Paper bags, Paper plates, Pebbles, Pencils, Plastic straws, Ribbon, Rubber Bands, Scissors, Spray bottles, Stickers, Stones, Tape, Thread, Twigs, Wire, Wood scraps, Yarn, Zippers and Natural Materials found outside

Acrylic paint, Beads, Buttons, Brushes, Chalk, Clay, Crayons, Markers, Mat Boards, Oil pastels, Watercolors, Tempera Paint, Pens, Pencils

Cutting mat, Exacto knife, Funnel, Glue gun, hammer, Hole punch, Pencil sharpener, Screwdriver, Tape Measure, Wood working Tools, and Yard stick,

# At home: Adventures await



# Along the path to discovery

It has been my intention to show you and your child are primed for learning . The stage is set, your props are ready, the principle actors are on top of their game, and it's almost show time. What happens next?

While in dialogue with your child or as you watch him or her play, you will start to notice/observe their areas or topics of interest. What sparks their curiosity and imagination regularly every day?

Imagine that you and your child are out for a walk in the woods near your house. While there, you meet a young boy who has a bucket full of water and tadpoles. Your child is so curious about the tadpole and wants to find some on his/her own. You spend, what seems like hours, sitting at the edge of the pond, looking for tadpoles. Pretty cool. What happens next is up to you and your child.

# Extended learning opportunities

Options for further exploration, especially if your child continues to show interest in the tadpoles

1. Read books and watch videos about tadpoles and frogs
2. Order tadpoles from Carolina Biologicals and create their new habitat
3. Learn how to care for the tadpoles and clean the habitat
4. Make a chart showing their growth (Tadpole, Froglet, Frog)
5. Observe the tadpoles and frogs in their habitat
6. Release them into the neighborhood creek
7. Daily reflections journal or conversation/make a book about the experience.

# A Pocket full of ideas

- Play “Call the Expert” when your child has questions about specific topics.
- Play “Name that Tune”
- Create an “Eye Spy” game out of random household objects
- Create a Book or Movie club
- Share your hobbies and interests with each other
- Learn a new skill together and chart your progress
- Create a “Word Wall” of all your favorite words
- Exercise together-Yoga, Pilates, Run, Walk, Bike, etc.
- Make a homemade board or card game
- Plan a Party together (any ole’ theme will do)
- Make a treasure chest for your child’s collections

# You've got this!!

- In your capable hands, your child is learning
- Be flexible. Your child's interests will change many times over and the best thing to do is "go with the flow"
- Do what works best for your family-there is no "one size fits all" approach to learning at home.
- Be patient, not only with your child, but with yourself.
- Take time to pause and reflect on the day.
- Show empathy and kindness for each other. Hugs throughout the day make the world a better place
- My favorite motto "If I can do this, I can do anything".

# Resources

1. The Power of Collections: How Starting a Collection Can Have Lasting Benefits for Your Child  
<https://www.melissaanddoug.com/blogpost/?postId=how-to-start-collecting-cool-collection-ideas-for-kids>
2. How Toddlers Thrive by Tovah B. Klein
3. The Power of Play by David Elkind
4. Einstein Never Used Flashcards by Diane E. Ayer, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Roberta Michnick Golinkoff
5. The Whole Brain Child by Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson
6. The Yes Brain by Daniel J. Siegel