A Practical Guide for Parents

Learning through play comes naturally for children. That makes a parent’s job super easy: Simply give kids time, space and freedom to play.

To make play even more powerful, try out these tips:

**ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**
- “Why do you think...?”
- “How did you...?”

**MAKE OBSERVATIONS**
- “I noticed how you flipped the piece over so it would fit”
- “I see you connected the tubes to make the water flow”

**POSE CHALLENGES**
- “I wonder what would happen if...”
- “What would you do if...?”

**TALK, TALK, TALK! START CONVERSATIONS**
- “Tell me about that time...”
- Use new and unexpected words

**LEAD BY EXAMPLE**
- Show you’re eager to learn, too
- Model confidence, cooperative behavior and flexible thinking

**SLOW DOWN**
- Don’t rush an activity
- Observe with purpose – notice details

**ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING**
- Remind yourself: Children are capable people
- Focus more on the process, less on the outcome
- Avoid imposing one “right way” of doing things
- Embrace repetition – give children time to do something again and again
- View a child’s failures (and your own!) as learning opportunities
- Try not to get frustrated – you’ve had more practice than they have!
- Make play a priority – for your children and yourself