

Vroom Tips™



These print-at-home tip sheets include a mix of Vroom Brain Building Activities™ for children ages 0-5. Share them, put them up on your fridge, or carry them around—whatever helps remind you that brain-building moments are all around you.

Brain Building Basics™

We've made the science of early learning simple! Remember these 5 actions to help build your child's brain anytime. They're color coded for easy finding.

Look

Children use their eyes to learn. See what catches your child's attention and talk about it. Or connect eye-to-eye, then smile, chat, hug, or make funny faces!

Follow

Young children learn best when you follow their lead. Tune into your child's words, sounds, movements and ideas! Then respond with your own words and actions.

Chat

Children's brains light up when you talk, sing, or make sounds back and forth with them. Chat about your day, food, and what's around you, or string sounds together for a fun conversation!

Take Turns

Children learn from taking turns when you play, talk, or explore. After they go, take your turn. Then repeat: they go, you go, they go, you go!

Stretch

Children's brains grow strong when you help them stretch their learning further. Keep a moment going: ask your child a question that starts with what, when, where, how or why!

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Just You and Me

During a quiet moment, sit or lay down near your child face-to-face and be silent for a few seconds. Watch them. Do they look at you? If they make sounds or smile, make sounds or smile back. There is so much you can say to each other with no words at all!

Suggested Age

0 - 6 months

Brainy Background



Creating a safe and trusting relationship builds a foundation for your child to feel supported as they learn and grow. When you take the time to watch your baby and get to know their style of communicating, you deepen your connection.

#1008

Learn more at vroom.org

Eye Gazing

Take a few minutes and look into your child's eyes. As they look back, smile and talk with them. Do what they do. If they blink, you blink. If they look left, you look left. Let them see your eyes too, and have fun keeping eye contact.

Suggested Age

0 - 12 months

Brainy Background



When your child looks at you, and you respond, they're making new connections in their brain. Children learn best through loving relationships. When you look at each other and react to each other, the bond you have is growing stronger.

#44

Learn more at vroom.org

Go Baby Go!

When your child begins to crawl, pull up, and eventually walk, celebrate their efforts with positive actions and words. Say things like: "You did it!" "You used your hands to reach your toy!" or "You're working so hard to move your body!" Make sure to clap and smile!

Suggested Age

6 months - 18 months

Brainy Background



When you praise your child's efforts to do things that are hard, you're showing them your support while encouraging them to take on challenges. Children who take on challenges do better in school and in life.

#72

Learn more at vroom.org

Exercise Buddy

Invite your child to help you exercise. Hold them while you do sit-ups, first fast and then slow. Talk about your speed with them. Do leg lifts and raise your leg above their head then back to the ground, talking about their size as you do. What else can you do?

Suggested Age **12 months - 18 months**

Brainy Background



Exercise and other physical play deepens your relationship with your child, building the trust and love between you. Your loving relationship is fuel for their brain.

#835

Learn more at vroom.org

Song Traditions

There are things we do every day. Sing the same songs at those moments to explain what you're doing with your child. Examples could be leaving a room, finishing eating, or washing hands. What else do you do daily that you could sing about?

Suggested Age **0 - 2 years**

Brainy Background



Children love traditions. Singing about your shared daily moments adds to the comfort of a known routine. It also helps your child connect these moments and new words. They love learning language from your sing-song voice.

#4

Learn more at vroom.org

Story Snuggle

Your child loves snuggling and hearing your voice. Get close and cuddle with them while sharing a story or song. Use a calm, quiet, and soothing voice to help them fall asleep quickly. This can become a nightly routine that lets them know it is time for bed.

Suggested Age **0 - 2 years**

Brainy Background



Creating a trusting relationship, with feelings of closeness and security, sets up an environment for learning. Talk back-and-forth and share words and sounds with them in stories and songs. When you do, you help them become lifelong learners.

#329

Learn more at vroom.org

Peekaboo Many Ways!

How many ways can you play “Peekaboo”? You can hide your eyes behind your hand, or use a hat, a napkin, or whatever is handy and then say “Peekaboo!” Help your child take a turn. What can they hide behind? Saying “I see you!” when one of you stops hiding should make you both laugh.

Suggested Age

6 months - 2 years

Brainy Background



This back-and-forth game builds the connection between you and your child. As they watch your face and movements, your child is learning to trust that things (and people!) go away and come back. This is an important part of building relationships and becoming independent.

#79

Learn more at vroom.org

Big Hug, Little Hug

When it’s time for a hug, ask your child if they want a big hug or a little hug and then do what they ask. Then you take a turn and say whether you want a big or little hug. You can add other words, like a wiggly hug or a quiet hug.

Suggested Age

12 months - 2 years

Brainy Background



The sense of touch is calming and comforting to your child. These hugs not only make your relationship stronger, they also allow you to share new words and concepts with them, like big and little.

#143

Learn more at vroom.org

Change-up Challenge

Is it hard for your child to change gears? Moving from one task to another can be a challenge. Work together to come up with a special routine. For example, each time you move from reading-time to another task, you can give each other a kiss, a hug, and a high five. Before you know it, they will be starting the change-up routine!

Suggested Age

12 months - 3 years

Brainy Background



This activity helps support your child in coming up with ways to manage their feelings. You’re helping them learn to use self-control in a hard moment. This ability is essential for learning, making friends, and problem solving.

#120

Learn more at vroom.org

Do It Yourself Dress Up

Ask your child to make choices about what they want to wear. Give options like, "Do you want to wear the white socks or the black socks?" Be silly and ask, "Will you wear them on your head? No!" Encourage them to try getting dressed on their own and praise how hard they're working.

Suggested Age

12 months - 3 years

Brainy Background



Your child feels supported in trying things that are challenging when you encourage them to have choices and control over decisions about what to wear. They're also using critical thinking skills when they decide where the clothes go on their body.

#480

Learn more at vroom.org

Today's Feelings

Ask your child to talk about their day using feeling words like happy, excited, and sad. Try questions like, "Was there a time when you felt frustrated today?" Ask them to make faces that express these feelings. Share your day as well.

Suggested Age

3 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



When you take time to talk about feelings with your child in fun ways every day, you make your relationship stronger. You're helping them connect feelings and actions, too. Once your child understands their emotions, they can better relate to others.

#67

Learn more at vroom.org

Practice Positivity

Practice saying things in new ways with your child. Take turns saying something negative, then try to talk about the same thing positively. For example, "I don't like loud noises" can become "I like quiet sounds."

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



This game is a good way to practice describing things and people in different ways. They're practicing language skills and how to see things from someone else's point of view. These skills are helpful in having good relationships now and in the future.

#40

Learn more at vroom.org

Stress Busters

During a calm moment, invite your child to think of ideas to help when they feel stressed. They can try using words to explain feelings, hitting something that can't be hurt, or counting numbers. See what works and brainstorm new ideas.

Suggested Age

2 1/2 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



Asking your child to think of ideas to help manage stress helps in several ways. They can learn to manage their feelings and behavior. You're also helping them learn to take on challenges.

#174

Learn more at vroom.org

Calm Down Kit

Use an empty shoebox or other container to make a "Calm Down Kit" with your child. Have your child put special items inside that help them feel secure and relaxed. When they are feeling upset, remind them to use their kit. They even can decorate the box to make it their own.

Suggested Age

2 1/2 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



It helps to make a "Calm Down Kit" before upset feelings happen. You're helping your child plan for how to handle stress so they can take action in a difficult moment. This gives them more control. It also builds skills important to tackling challenges.

#941

Learn more at vroom.org

Belly Breathing

Help your child learn to breathe deeply when feeling upset. Have them close their eyes and put their hand on their belly to feel it go out when they breathe in. When breathing out, their belly moves in. Remind them to use Belly Breathing to help them calm down.

Suggested Age

3 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



When you ask your child to focus on their breathing when they feel upset, you help them practice self-control. They also learn to manage emotions in hard situations. This ability continues to develop throughout life and supports your child in solving problems on their own.

#114

Learn more at vroom.org

Waiting Strategies

Waiting for a parent to finish a meeting or task can be hard. Help your child come up with strategies for waiting. Say something like, "Think of as many red things as you can." Or, "How many words can you come up with that start with the letter G?"

Suggested Age

3 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



When you help your child learn to manage feelings on their own, you support their ability to problem solve. They can also better control their behavior according to the situation. These skills are important for learning in school and life.

#244

Learn more at vroom.org

Memory Moments

Share a favorite family moment with your child. Say something like, "Remember the first time you tried the slide at the playground?" Talk about the memory and ask them how it felt and what they were thinking. You might be surprised at what they remember!

Suggested Age

3 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



Making memories and creating stories helps your child learn to love language. Your child is practicing memory and attention skills as they share. It makes your special bond stronger, too!

#336

Learn more at vroom.org

Dream Story

At bedtime, ask your child: "What do you want to dream about tonight? Do you want to dream you're going to a far-away place? Or doing something special?" Encourage them to tell you as many details as they can imagine. Then share a Dream Story of your own.

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

Brainy Background



Taking time to slow down and think encourages your child to use focus and control their behavior. Coming up with Dream Stories also encourages your child's creative thinking. Bedtime routines not only help build your child's brain, they strengthen the bond you have together.

#346

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