

Lateralization (left hand/right hand)

How do you know if a child is right or left handed?

Neuroscience research shows us that the brain is divided into two distinct parts: the right and left hemispheres. The two hemispheres control our body's motor functions in reverse.

In most people, the left hemisphere controls language. And it is the same area of the left hemisphere that controls hand movements. That's why almost all humans (about 90%) are right-handed when using tools or making gestures.

Scientists in the first half of the 20th century considered left-handedness to be an anomaly and associated it with a series of dysfunctions - language deficits, mental illness. In fact, many left-handed people born at that time were forced to write with their right hand, in the hope of "converting" them to right-handedness.

Today, it is recognized that being left-handed or right-handed is not a binary characteristic (left-handed on one side, right-handed on the other), but that there is a kind of gradation, from absolute left-handedness to absolute right-handedness, with many degrees in between.

As they develop their motor skills, children use both their right and left hands to reach for objects, as both hands can easily perform these tasks. However, more specific tasks require the "specialized" intervention of the left hemisphere of the brain. This is why most children use their right hand to write.

Writing skills develop over time and the use of the right or left hand is confirmed as the child learns to hold the pen, moving from a "palm grip" (with the whole hand) to draw initial shapes on a page to a "tripod grip" (with three fingers) to form and connect letters. Between the ages of 4 and 6, the child shows a marked preference for the left or the right. Before this age, the child cannot perform tasks with precision.

How to accompany the child?

- Suggest to the child that he/she use his/her left and/or right hand on many occasions.
- In certain activities (e.g., meals), offer the child to hold two identical objects in one hand (e.g., a spoon) that he or she can use according to his or her preference.
- Observing the child and the way he/she is (where he/she leans, marked preference for one hand...) can be a good indicator of his/her manual preference.

And if you are part of the 10% of the population who do not know their right from their left, here is a little tip that can help you:



Source :

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