

Learning and Cognitive Development: Overview

Teaching Tips:

- Many parents are interested in helping their children become "smarter," but they may not understand the ways in which children think and learn.
- While introducing this topic, be sure to remind parents that while there are definitive cognitive milestones that children encounter at various ages and at different stages of development, every child is unique and will develop at his or her own pace.
- It may be helpful to start with a general question, such as "what helps children learn?" to get parents thinking about the topic.
- Remember to discuss how cognitive development is closely intertwined with all other types of development, including physical, social and emotional, and language.

Learning Objectives for Parents and Caregivers

After learning about cognitive development, parents and caregivers will be able to:

- 1) Explain how children learn
- 2) Understand developmentally appropriate expectations
- 3) Implement strategies and tips to help support learning for children

Key Messages for Parents and Caregivers

- 1) Cognitive development is the process by which the brain takes in information and makes meaning.
- 2) The brain learns through experience.
- 3) The brain will always try to make meaning.
- 4) Learning involves conscious and unconscious memory.
- 5) Every child learns in their own way.
- 6) Learning is social, developmental, and relies on patterns.
- 7) Emotions and relationships are critical for forming patterns.

