

Home Contact About Forums Newsletter Videos Links

Waldorf Resources

 Search 

ENG DEU ESP



The most important thing for which we can prepare a child is the experience of freedom, at the right moment in life, through the understanding of one's own being.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

Foundations Early Childhood Teaching Practice Self Development Sch

Teaching Practice

Television, family, role model, stories, nature

By: Susan R. Johnson, May 2015, First published by AWSNA Publications. May 1999

What can parents do for their child's healthy brain development?

Susan R. Johnson, the well-know US American pediatrician, has compiled a list of tips for parents, regarding television viewing. Her suggestions could also be the basis for discussions at a parents' evening on media

中文 Chinese

Events

Cancelled! First Asian Waldorf Upper School Teachers Conference
24.04.2020 - 01.05.2020

International Conference A Child from Birth to 3
17.05.2020

International Waldorf Early Childhood Whitsun Conference
29.05.2020 - 02.06.2020

Youth Financial Literacy Research Colloquium
03.06.2020

International Early Childhood Conference

consumption. Please also refer to Johnson's article "Strangers in our Homes" which explains the effects of television viewing on the child's brain development.



What can we do to help our children's brains develop?

1. Keep the television turned off as

much as possible. One author recommended avoiding television as much as possible for the first 12 years of your child's life and then encouraging your child to always read the book first before seeing the movie. It helps to cover the TV with a cloth or store it away in a closed cabinet or closet. Out of sight really helps the child keep the TV out of mind (Large 1997).

Remember that what we do serves as a role model for our children. We can't really ask our children to stop watching TV if we keep doing it - that will eventually lead to power struggles.

When the television is on, then try to neutralize its damage. Select the programs carefully and watch TV with your child so you can talk about what you see. Keep a light on when the TV is going since that will minimize the effects of the reduced field of vision and provide a different light source for the eyes. Try to sit at least 4 feet from the television and 18 inches from the computer screen. Plan to go outside (to the park, woods or beach) after viewing television.

2. Read a lot of books to your children (especially ones without a lot of pictures) and tell

10.06.2020 - 13.06.2020

[More events...](#)

Please Donate



Join over 4000 other subscribers and receive exclusive articles, news and events concerning contemporary Waldorf Education worldwide four times a year.

Email*

Type your email

Yes, I agree to the privacy policy.*

Read the [Privacy Policy](#)

Subscribe to List

Join us on facebook

YouTube channel

Become a sponsor

With kind support by



your children lots of stories. Children love to hear stories about our lives when we were little or you can make them up. Bedtime and riding in the car provide good opportunities for telling stories. Telling our children stories helps to stimulate their internal picture-making capabilities.

3. Nature! Nature! Nature! Nature is the greatest teacher of patience, delayed gratification, reverence, awe and observation. The colors are spectacular and all the senses are stimulated. Many children today think being out in nature is boring because they are so used to the fast-paced, action-packed images from TV (Poplawski 1998). We only truly learn when all our senses are involved and when the information is presented to us in such a way that our higher brain can absorb it. Nature is reality while television is pseudo-reality.

4. Pay close attention to your senses and those of your child. Our environment is noisy and over-stimulating to the sense organs. What a child sees, hears, smells, tastes, and touches is extremely important to his or her development. We need to surround our children with what is beautiful, what is good, and what is true. How a child experiences the world has a tremendous influence on how the child perceives the world as a teenager and adult.

5. Have children use their hands, feet and whole body to perform purposeful activities. All the outdoor activities of running, jumping, climbing, and playing jump rope help develop our children's gross motor skills and myelinate pathways in the higher brain.

Performing household chores, cooking, baking

bread, knitting, woodworking, origami, string games, finger games, circle games, painting, drawing, and coloring help develop fine motor skills and also myelinate pathways in the higher brain.

Finally, the future of our children and our society is in the protection and development of our children's minds, hearts and limbs.

What we are aiming for in the thoughts of our children is best summarized in this fine verse from William Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*:

*To see a world in a grain of sand
and a heaven in a wild flower
hold infinity in the palm of your hand
and eternity in an hour.*

Susan R. Johnson MD, FAAP, completed a three-year fellowship in Behavioral and Developmental Pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco and a graduate of the San Francisco Waldorf Teacher Training Program affiliated with Rudolf Steiner College. She has a private practice in Behavioral and Developmental Pediatrics at Raphael House in Colfax, CA.

With kind permission by AWSNA Publications and The Research Institute for Waldorf Education

Related News:

Strangers in our Homes: TV and our Children's Minds (i) - May 2015

The omnipresent companion - March 2015

To top

On behalf of the International Forum for Steiner/Waldorf Education in cooperation with the Pedagogical Section
Rütliweg 45, CH-4143 Dornach, Ph +41617064315, [info\(at\)waldorf-resources.org](mailto:info@waldorf-resources.org), [Imprint](#)



[Privacy Policy](#)