

Are we there yet?

BRAIN-BUILDING TIPS FOR YOUR NEXT ROAD TRIP



Road trips, whether short or long, are the perfect time to build relationships, make connections and support brain development with young children.

Did you know positive, supportive experiences with adults help your child's brain grow strong and flexible? Road trips with young children provide opportunities to engage and build positive connections in their brain, as well as create memories that will last a lifetime. Try one of these Vroom® Brain Building Activities™ on your next road trip!

Signs Everywhere

Suggested Age:
12 months–3 years

Tip: When you go on an outing with your child, make it a habit to point out the different street signs, letters, and words that you see on your way. Share back and forth conversations with them, like, "There is the sign with the picture of the bus. That's where we wait to ride the bus. What do you see?"

Brainy Background™

Your child learns about what is important by watching and talking with you. When you point out the signs around you, you're helping your child make sense of the world while also encouraging them to make connections between symbols and their meaning. This is a big part of learning how to read.

Let's Ride!

Suggested Age:
12 months–
2 1/2 years

Tip: As you ride in a bus, train, or car with your child, talk about the ride! You can say, "Here comes a bumpy road!" and talk about how it feels or sway back and forth as you say, "Here come the curves!" Talk about whether you're going fast or slow and how that feels. Let them try to describe the ride. Taking turns is fun!

Brainy Background™

As you talk about your ride, you encourage your child to think flexibly and switch between different ideas. This promotes creative thinking. When they experience what words like bumpy mean, they're more likely to remember and use them later.

Counting Cars

Suggested Age:
4–5 years

Tip: Before you go out, ask your child what color of car they think is the most popular. Invite them to count how many cars of that color they see along the way. At the same time, you look for a different color and keep track too. Then talk about what you found out together.

Brainy Background™

Your child is using critical thinking to do this, just like a scientist. They first come up with an idea (the popular car color) and then they test it out (counting the cars). They must use their memory to keep track of the number of cars and focus to tune out distractions.

Once Upon a Time

Suggested Age:
3–5 years

Tip: On a long ride, make up funny stories with your child. You start it off with something like, "Once upon a time there was a teeny, tiny wiggly ant..." Then let them tell you what happens next. Take turns adding to the story and see how far their imagination can go.

Brainy Background™

As you go back and forth inventing a story, the interesting, new, and fun words you use invite your child to add to their growing vocabulary. This is an important part of communicating with others.



Visit WeAreBrainBuilders.org for more brain-building resources for families.

Powered by
vroom™

ChildCare
Aware
OF AMERICA