

CHOOSING CHILD CARE that Boosts Your Child's Developing Brain



Parents are their child's first and most important teacher. As a parent, you know that positive learning experiences at home and in the care of other trusted adults are important for helping your child get ready for school and life. Families and early childhood educators are critical partners for building young children's brains!



When visiting a child care program, look for the five Brain Building Basics™

REFLECT

1 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!

Is the educator watching to see what interests the children? Does the educator connect with the children on their level with eye contact, smiles, talking, a high-five, or even a silly face?

2 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.

Does the educator describe or talk about what children are doing or playing? Do they imitate cooing and babbling? Do they ask questions and support children's ideas?

3

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!

REFLECT

Can you hear pleasant chatter from educators and children as they learn and play?

4

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!

Do you see the educator having back and forth interactions with the children?

5

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!

Does the educator know how to keep a learning moment going?

Visit WeAreBrainBuilders.org for more information on brain building resources for families.

To learn more about what to look for and ask when choosing child care visit ChildCareAware.org/families or contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency.

