

# TEACHING KIDS TO BE CREATIVE

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In our home we had two children with completely different creativity standpoints. We discovered that one was predominantly left-brained and the other right.

People who are left-brain-dominant, tend to like math and science, and have an analytical approach to life. They like to read manuals before they start putting something together or pulling it apart, and can analyze problems through a clear process of elimination. They like structure. They like to work within frameworks that have already been created.

Right-brain-dominant people, on the other hand, do not enjoy being restricted by structure. They like to create from scratch. They are more perceptual and enjoy arts, photography, philosophy, writing stories, poems, and songs. We would give our daughter a box of buttons, scraps of paper and yarn, old egg cartons, thread reels, glue and scissors, and leave her to it. She would produce a highly decorative alligator.

If we were to have given the same materials to our son, he wouldn't have known what to do with them. However, if we gave him Leggo or Meccano pieces, and we showed him some things he could make, he was happy for hours. It is not that he had no initiative. It is just that his brain needed to be given some instructions to get his creative juices flowing. If we understand how our brains work, we can tap into the right wavelength to better utilize our creative energies.

It is important to let kids play with dress up clothes, boxes, paper, crayons, plastic scissors, paints, paper, glue, and tools. It is also important to let them get their hands dirty and to play in the mud. Some kids like to be left alone with the raw materials and some need to be given ideas. Whatever it takes, make sure there is time every day for kids to enjoy play and experiment with materials and textures. Ask them about what they are making and give them a little help if they ask for it. Just don't take over! By letting your kids try all sorts of play activities you will discover what they have a flare for, and then you can encourage them to pursue it.

Creative projects teach kids how to plan, how to persevere, how to work together, how to solve problems, and how to read instructions. It provides an opportunity for quality time between parents and kids.

To help kids expand their imaginations, it is important to encourage them to read. Start by reading to your kids every day from the time they are 6 months old. When they can read, stimulate their minds by taking them to the library and letting them choose books to take home.

Play is a no-pressure way for them to discover what their passions really are. Kids will develop a sense of personal value when they accomplish or master tasks and are affirmed for their great ideas. Imagination is a wonderful thing. We need to nurture it – in ourselves and in our children.

If you have any comments or questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at [sally@forefrontfamilies.org](mailto:sally@forefrontfamilies.org). We invite you to also check out our website at [www.forefrontfamilies.org](http://www.forefrontfamilies.org) and our blog site at [www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com](http://www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com) for further assistance.