

# Connecting with your Young Child using S.T.E.P.S.



It's easy to feel overwhelmed and stressed while at home with young children. Here are some tips for parents to help nurture healthy brain development in their children ages 0-5 using S.T.E.P.S.

**S**ecurity helps stimulate healthy brain development. Parents lacking the ability to provide security because of financial hardship or a lack of food can access local resources to meet these security needs first. Parents must also care for themselves so that they can properly care for their children. Developing new, temporary routines can decrease negative behaviors, reinforce positive ones and stave off boredom.



Plant flowers to teach about nurturing and providing basic needs for survival; Look through old photos to make the kids feel loved and safe.

**T**ouch can be used to teach children about safety when touching dirty surfaces and being sure to wash their hands, specifically before they put their hands in their mouth.

Make touch books using different materials for sensory stimulation; Reduce stress in your child by giving a gentle massage on the head, shoulders, arms, back, face, legs and feet at least 2x a week.

**E**yes should be watchful to look for potential hazards in the environment, which prevents accidents and situations of neglect. You should also limit screen time, which overstimulates the brain, especially in the early years of life. Too much screen time can lead to cognitive issues that can affect their behavior.



Make environmental print books to teach about signs, colors, numbers, and letters; Pointing and rolling balls are great ways to improve your baby's eye-hand coordination.

**P**lay is the best, and most fun, way for kids to learn! Kids learn through repetition and games you play with your children will strengthen brain connections. Use this time to bond with your kids by playing more family games: remember that the parent is the child's best toy!

Engage in pretend play using imagination, which enhances creativity; Strengthen fine and gross motor skills through playing with blocks and puzzles, making slime, and playing board/card games.

**S**ound provides different ways to communicate with your child, including reading, writing, music, arts and crafts, games, and simple conversations. Talking with them during these activities enhances language development.



Listen to music, sing and dance with your child!