

Intellectual Curiosity

People who are curious and who love learning new things are usually happier and more optimistic than those who have no interest in learning. Furthermore, those who are curious generally do well academically, and find work that is continually interesting to them.

The great thing about curiosity is that, for most children, it's already there! We LOVE learning when we are young. Unfortunately, there are many things we do in families and schools that actually destroy our love of learning and our curiosity. But it doesn't have to be like that. Parents can do several things that will foster curiosity and a love of learning in their children, and help them grow up intellectually stimulated and successful.

1. **Model a love of learning.**

Be seen reading, finding answers, and discovering things yourself. Your children will watch and learn from you.

2. **Embrace the motto “we try new things”.**

Whether it is a new meal, a new sport, a new holiday destination, or a new way of cleaning the house, let your children know that you want to try new things and discover things you previously did not know much about.

3. **Teach your children to find answers.**

When your children ask you a question, rather than answering them directly encourage them to find out for themselves. Point them to references, the Internet, or other useful sources.

4. **Ask questions.**

If your child is curious about something, find out why. Encourage discussion. Find out what s/he knows already. When your child makes a statement (about anything) you can ask “why” and have an interesting conversation. Your demonstration of curiosity can be a terrific example to your children

5. **Be willing to talk.**

It is often easy for a parent to say “I’ll tell you later”, or “Not now, I’m busy.” Such responses will dampen the enthusiasm and curiosity a child has for a subject. Be being available, your child will be able to pursue a love of learning and all you have to do is facilitate it.

6. **Provide tools for learning.**

Provide tools for learning by visiting the library, buying books from the shops, and having access to the Internet available for appropriate learning activities.

7. **Eliminate the use of rewards for learning.**

Research shows that the more we reward someone for a task, the less interested they become in the task. When rewards are offered, people generally become more interested in the reward than in the process required to obtain the reward. Instead, encourage curiosity for its own sake.

Being curious about things means we love learning. By the time our children are entering high school, many of them are no longer curious because we have convinced them that learning is boring! But nothing could be further from the truth. People who love learning demonstrate positive outcomes in their lives, and all we have to do as parents is make sure we don't extinguish the flame of curiosity.