

CHILD CARE CHOICES

Partners in Parenting



Publication of
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Sit Down and Think About It!

How many times did you hear that when you were a child and didn't know how to handle a problem with a friend or a teacher? Or when a math problem had you stymied? Or when you had a big, puzzling mess to clean up?

As it turns out, "sit down and think about it" may be the best advice ever. We are proud of our multi-tasking efficiency, texting with one hand while we spoon carrots to the baby with the other—or talking on the phone while we huff and puff on the elliptical machine. Technology can not only entertain us, but also enable us to brag (oh, my!) about how busy (and important?) we are!

Perhaps, unfortunately, we are bringing up our children to think the same way, that keeping our minds busy lets us escape boredom (reality?)

Certainly electronic gadgets can save us time and make us potentially more productive, and they help our children get that homework done in time to get to football or soccer or dance or whatever practice is demanding our kids' time.

Scientists, however, point out that when people keep their brains busy with digital input, they are giving up downtime that allows them to better learn and retain information or come up with new ideas. Studies at UC San Francisco, the University of Michigan, and Harvard Medical School, all indicate that the parts of the brain controlling thinking, memory, and emotions perform better after rest in the same way our physical bodies do.*

So what are the implications here for parenting?

- ◆ **Keep in mind that the computer is a tool, not an end in itself!**
- ◆ Read to young children and provide books for older children to read.
- ◆ Permit *no* electronics entertainment for children under age three.
- ◆ **Be the parent!** Limit the time school age children use electronics for games or TV watching to no more than one hour a day—weekends only!
- ◆ Recognize that time spent on the computer or watching TV gets in the way of acquiring social skills.
- ◆ Teach children to regard computers as sources of information rather than entertainment.
- ◆ Limit your own use of electronics—children learn what they see!

*"Your Brain on Computers," a series in the New York Times, Aug. 25, 2010

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THE BOOK LOOK FOR PARENTS

www.nytimes.com/tech

Lost in Electronica, The Costs of the Chaos of Constant Connection by George Will

Baby Play, GYMBOREE, by Dr. Wendy S. Masi and Dr. Roni Cohen Leiderman

Toddler Play, GYMBOREE, by Dr. Wendy S. Masi

FOR CHILDREN

Arthur's Computer Disaster by Marc Tolon Brown

Yoga for Your Children by Lyn Marshall

(over)



The Busy Body Book by Lizzy Rockwell

Dirt Boy Eric John Slanagerup

Calico's Exercise Book by Donald Charles

"A Rose for Abby" by Donna Guthrie

Mr. Bow Tie by Karen Barbour

This Home We Have Made by Anna Hammond

A Handful of Seeds by Monica Hughes

December by Eve Bunting

Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting

Edward the Crazy Man by Marie Day

The Roses in My Carpets by Rukhsana Khan

Old Man Up a Tree by Gareth Adamson

The Miller, His Son, and Their Donkey, an Aesop Fable illustrated by Roger Antoine Duvoisin

Digging Up Dinosaurs by Alikei

Miss Nelson Has a Field Day by Harry Allard

Miss Nelson Is Missing! by Harry Allard

Miss Nelson is Back by Harry Allard

Mr. Simkin's Grandma by Linda Allen

The Emperor's New Clothes by Hans Christian Andersen illustrated by Erik Blegvad

Bantam of the Opera by Mary Jane Auch

Worthington Botts and the Steam Machine by Betty Baker

