

## Nurturing Creativity In Children

Written by admin

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According to the authors of "Mind Gym," "When it comes to creative thinking, being too literal doesn't pay... Looking at a picture and imagining what it could be as opposed to what it is can release a fresh train of thought." This is the same kind of "could be" creativity that children use. Give a child a cardboard box, and it can become a spaceship, a boat, a car, a cubby house, a cave... anywhere their imagination wants to go. They are not worried about whether it is correct or not. Children will color pigs orange with stripes, if the idea takes them. It is that kind of experimentation that helps us along the path to solving problems in our work, personal life or creative endeavor, even as adults. Sometimes to think outside the box, we need to get hold of a big empty cardboard box to sit in, look at, turn over, cut up, re-color and imagine in a new form. To recapture a "could be" spirit, you need to provide an environment where exploration is encouraged, welcomed and free from restraint and criticism.

Building that kind of creative environment in your home is an important element in fostering creative potential. It gives everyone the necessary permission to make striped, orange pigs for the joy of experimentation and discovery. An environment which is free from having to do things the right way, even in play, is a major step in the right direction. I remember as a child that I always colored animals in their correct color because I would be told I was wrong. Pigs were pink, brown or white, and that was the way it had to be. It stopped me from experimenting.

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Experts on how children learn tell you that children need to build collections, be silly, and be exposed to a wide range of activities. Not only will it help them, but the very same principles and activities will inspire and enhance your creativity.

Listen to a broad range of music, watch new television programs, visit museums, art galleries and places that are different to what you would normally choose. Read a different magazine or book genre every so often. Discover something new. The more widely your experience ranges, also the more your children and those around you will be as you role model exploratory behavior.

To nurture children's innate desire to explore, it is recommended that you:

1. Allow freedom and autonomy.
2. De-emphasize passive stimulus/response; extrinsic reward and competition.
3. Encourage trial, error and failure as opportunity.
4. Focus on intrinsic goals.
5. Challenge the inventive spirit.
6. Support interests.
7. Inspire by involvement and role modelling.

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8. Create fun and enjoyment and freedom and autonomy.

9. Recognize process based accomplishment.

10. Embrace diversity in people and in approach.

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