

SCIS

Let children solve problems their own way

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AMONG the many hopes that parents and teachers have for their children, one of the most wished-for traits is creativity. Being creative develops confidence, helps with problem solving, connects us to other people, and makes us happy.

Pablo Picasso said "every child is an artist, the problem is staying an artist when you grow up." Young children are not afraid to express themselves in unconventional ways, to try new things and take risks. It is only as we get older that we become self-conscious and start doubting our own abilities. Parents and teachers can help their children maintain

and grow their creative minds by giving them freedom, setting a creative example, and embracing mistakes.

To foster creativity, children need space to solve problems on their own. By all means be available to help with a difficult homework problem or a new artistic technique, but giving your child the answer at the first sign of trouble will never encourage them to think for themselves.

Provide the resources for your child to express themselves at home, and try to spend time together doing creative things. Keep it simple, like cooking a new recipe or taking some photos of your neighborhood, but modeling creativity shows your child that it's important.

Teach your children to make the most of mistakes, and to value process over product. A wonderful children's book called "Beautiful Oops!" by Barney Saltzberg explores how we can turn mistakes into masterpieces. Instead of focusing on the problem, encourage children to come up with creative solutions.

Much research has been done on the topic of creativity, and this is by no means an exhaustive list of suggestions. I encourage parents and teachers to keep an open mind and work collaboratively to give children the best creative experience possible. Raising children to be creative thinkers helps them not just in school, but in life.



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