

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO EXPLORE, MAKE CHOICES, AND MISTAKES

When your child gets older, do you want him/her to stand up for what he/she believes in? To not be pushed or led around by classmates?

Then you have to nurture his/her independence today and everyday.

Make sure you:

Give your child toys that allow him/her to “make things happen.” These include toys that roll and pop, nontoxic paints, paper, and musical instruments.

Let your child direct his/her own playing.

Encourage your child to “do for himself/herself.” Let them put on his/her own socks and shoes. Teach them how to wash up and brush their teeth. Show them how and where to put their toys away.

Let your child experience a little frustration as he/she does for himself/herself. Only by facing a challenge can they feel the thrill of overcoming it. But step in before they get overwhelmed.

Encourage your child to “do for others.” Ask them to help with daily chores—like setting the table or washing fruit.

Give your child choices every day: which of two outfits to wear; which healthy snack to eat; which story to read; or which song to sing.

Encourage your child to explore and be curious.

Remember your child learns through trial and error. Tell them it is okay to make mistakes.

Recognize each small effort and any progress your child makes.