



NOISE AND LEARNING

Reading 0 yrs+

Children's Literacy Resource Guide

Noise can hinder learning



In today's wired world, the home is often a very noisy place, with televisions blasting, computers beeping, cell phones playing their tunes. To ensure that your home is the best learning environment, it's a good idea to reduce the noise level.

Babies listen to all sounds around them instead of focusing on any one sound. Gradually, as children grow up, they learn to focus on important sounds and 'tune out' the background noise, but this process can take many years.

The ability to hear the separate sounds in speech is vital for proper speech development and for learning to read. It is developed in the first years of life. Even if your baby's brain functions in the normal range, he or she will benefit from quiet surroundings. And if your baby has budding learning problems, these problems will be more easily detected in their earliest stages in a quiet environment.

Over the years a number of studies (mostly of children living near airports) have revealed that all children learn to read better in quieter environments.

Tips for Parents

- ◆ When reading to children, from babyhood up, make sure there are few distractions, seen or heard. Hold or touch baby when talking to him or her. That helps baby focus.
- ◆ For older children, try to face them when you talk to them.
- ◆ Even better, get down at their eye level and look into their eyes. Use hand movements and facial expression to help them understand.
- ◆ Turn off the TV when it's not being watched.
- ◆ If you feel your child may have a hearing problem, tell your family doctor or visit the nearest CLSC. Or visit the webpage of the **Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists**. www.caspa.ca