



Vancouver Island Cooperative
Preschool Association

Member of Parent Participation
Preschools International (PCPI)

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COVERALL

Fall 2006

V I C P A



Build on Your Child's Learning Style

By Jeannie Ralston, September 2006

Stick with what works. That's what Judi Newell thought when she started talking about coins with her daughter, Fiona, 3. "A penny is brown and worth one cent," she began, pointing to a drawing of one in a book. "A nickel is worth five cents." This is how she'd taught her older daughter, Anna, 9, about money. But while Anna had slurped up the facts, Newell could tell her approach wasn't helping Fiona make sense of cents.

"We both got very frustrated," says Newell, who lives in Clemson, South Carolina. "Finally, a little light went on and I got actual coins to show her. I let Fiona pick them up and see and feel the difference in size and weight — and it worked! In no time, she was able to tell me which coin was which and how much each was worth."

For Newell, this was a clear example of a phenomenon many parents struggle with: Every child learns differently. There's no such thing as one-size-fits-all — even within a family who shares DNA. "Usually when we're explaining something to our kids, we just go with what worked for us, or what we've been taught," says Cynthia Ulrich Tobias, author of *The Way They Learn*. "Then we discover

that what works well with one child can fail with another. And that can be exhausting."

Most parents intuitively sense that their child has his own so-called learning style but may be at a loss as to how to capitalize on it. But determining your child's learning style is no more complicated than figuring out what kind of books he likes or the types of games he likes to play. There are three main ways people learn: by listening, looking, or doing. Your child might lean heavily on one of these modes, or he might use a combination. Here's how to figure it out.

When our oldest son, Gus, was 2, he asked more than once, "Mommy, does your back hurt in the morning? Maybe you need a sleep-comfort adjustable bed." He'd then go on to recite verbatim an ad he'd heard on TV. We learned early on not only that we were letting him watch too much TV but also that he had a great capacity to retain information he'd heard, which I now know makes him what's known as an auditory learner.

"Jacob, my youngest, wants you to tell him everything," says Angie DeRouen, a mom of two in Austin,

Texas. "He loves to learn but likes to do it by having a conversation. When we read, he doesn't seem to care about the pictures in a book. He can be walking around while I'm reading to him and still hear everything. It seems like he's not paying attention, but he is."

Since an auditory learner is likely to be good at remembering songs and ditties, turning school lessons into jingles — like an ad — could be a useful trick to remember when he gets older. But these learners don't only like to listen; they like to talk. As I can attest, many auditory types are chattier than a parrot with a Starbucks habit. Repeating information — sometimes over and over again — helps them to process it. Most toddlers and preschoolers like to do this to some degree, but kids who learn by listening do it a lot.

How to play to their strengths: Now that Gus, 9, is in school, I've found that when he's learning something new, having him repeat the idea back to me to reinforce it in his mind is a big help. Another strategy is to have your child teach the information to, say, a favorite stuffed animal ("Can you explain to Mr. Hops why we wash

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Calendar Of Events

October

- TBA E&O Workshop 7-9 p.m.
- 13 ECE Committee Meeting
- 17 VICPA Executive Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 19 Vice-Presidents, Personnel Cttee.
Workshop Fireside Lounge- Lakehill
7-9 p.m.
- 24 VICPA Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

November

- 17 E.C.E. Committee Meeting
- 21 VICPA Executive Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 28 VICPA Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Lochside Elementary Library

December

- NO Executive or Board Meeting
- 22 CHRISTMAS BREAK OFFICE CLOSED
- reopen January 8th

President's Pen



September always brings a mixed feeling of excitement and anxiety for me. The mornings are cooler, the evenings are shorter, and while the days are often still hot and sunny, I know that summer is coming to a close and it is time to look ahead. Of course, the biggest transition for most of us at this time of year is the start of school. For some families, this will be the first time having a child in preschool. Other families are returning with their "three" who is now a "four"! Still others may be returning with a second, third or fourth child to begin preschool.

We all have similar hopes for our children as we see them off to school. We hope that they will form friendships with their peers, feel a trust and connection with their teacher and learn and grow from the experience.

I have the same hope for us as parents. We have the unique and wonderful fortune to be a part of co-operative preschool and it can give us the same opportunities as it gives our children. Parents always have a

strong support network in the co-op schools. We are always able to take any concerns, inquiries or problems to the ECE, school executive or to VICPA. Our ECE's are always a source of help for any questions we have about our children. And while class parents may not yet know each other well at the beginning of the year, we will soon, through getting to know one another's children, be able to share in the great experience of preschool.

This fall, as we all begin the school experience, let us act as both a role model to our children and their students, as we look to them as teachers. If we make the effort to connect with the people around us, both ourselves and our children will truly experience the benefits of co-operative education. This is a chance for parent and child alike to form strong bonds of friendship and to learn and grow from the experience.

Karen Sherman
VICPA President



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The many faces of coop preschool

Promotes direct involvement of parents

Emphasizes 'Learning Through Play'

Offers high quality early childhood education

Provides ongoing parent education

Facilitates life-long friendships

Enroll now for September

Vancouver Island
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a preschool in your area
or visit www.vicpa.org

Making Tomorrow Conference
in May 2006
Keynote - Mary Gordon



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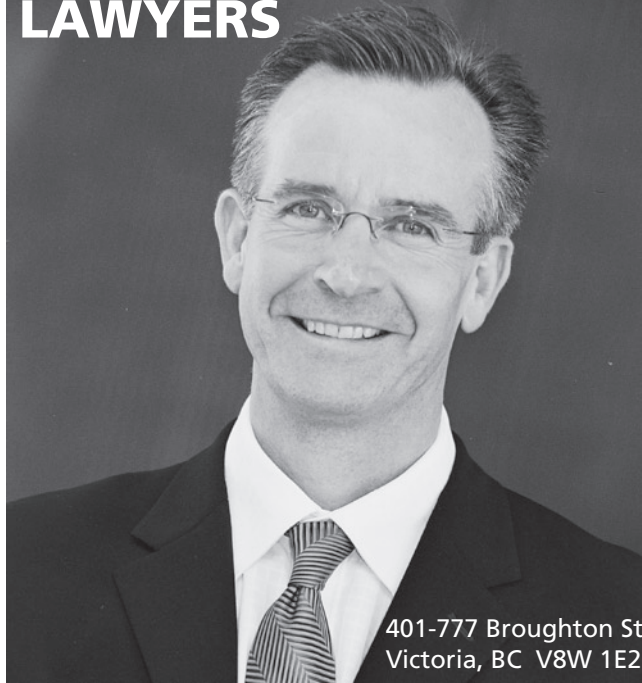
our hands after using the toilet?”), says Edgar McIntosh, a first-grade teacher in New York City and the coauthor of *Multisensory Strategies*. “The act of putting something into words pushes a kid to grasp the concept more fully.”

Auditory learners need quiet for concentrated tasks. “One of my twins can do homework anywhere and shut out all the other noises,” says Shannon Holt, a mom of four, in Kingsport, Tennessee. “The other will be right next to him in the kitchen and he’ll have to shout, ‘Will everyone please be quiet!’” One mom I know uses soft, classical music to drown out competing noises and help her sons focus.

Lisa Duncan believes her daughter, Mia, 6, may have a photographic memory. Once when she was 2, she fell into an anthill while playing. “To this day, she can describe exactly what shoes she had on, what her brother was doing, and what the sky looked like,” says Duncan, a mom of three from Dripping Springs, Texas, who has found it can be quite convenient to have a visual person around the house. “If we lose anything, we ask Mia where it might be,” she says, “and she usually has a picture in her mind of where she last saw it.”

Kids like Mia have an ability to store vivid snapshots in their brains and then recall that information when needed. They tend to be able to learn easily from pictures, videos, maps, models, and charts. I know a friend whose 4-year-old had trouble getting ready for preschool in the mornings. She seemed to be a visually inclined child, so her mom had the idea of taking photos of her doing her morning activities — getting dressed, making her bed, eating breakfast, and brushing her teeth. She then posted them in the proper sequence on the wall near her bed, and the visual aides did the trick.

David Mulrone & Company LAWYERS



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How to play to their strengths: Sometimes a visually oriented child can be so captured by what she sees that she can't concentrate on one element. “When I sit down to read with my son Sam, his eyes go all over the page,” says DeRouen. “He tries to take in everything at once.” To help him learn to read, she puts a small rectangle cut out of a piece of cardboard over a page of a book so only words show through the hole. “It's improved his reading because he can concentrate better now, but he still looks at all the pictures first,” she says. That's okay, since a picture is likely to be worth at least a thousand words to a child who learns best by seeing — whether it's your showing her a photo or your child making a drawing to help her understand something she's just learning.

Like auditory learners, visual kids often need order and quiet. Trying to get them to remember something while the TV is on is as irrational as

The Night Before Late Night Shopping

Sunday, November 19th, 2006
Hillside Center
6:00 – 9:30 pm

Sixth Annual “The Night Before Late Night Shopping” tickets are now available at each of the preschools. Once again this year, VICPA has arranged for a supply of these tickets for each of our preschools. Tickets cost \$5 each and all proceeds go direct to the selling preschool. The \$5 ticket provides you with admittance into Hillside Center's special evening of late night shopping. There will be great in-store bargains, tasty treats, live entertainment and door prizes, including a grand prize of a family vacation for 4 to Disneyland!

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asking a 1-year-old to put away your bone china.

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I remember that when my boys were 5 and 3, I thought they should learn to identify rhymes. But they wouldn't sit still long enough. They were wearing capes from old Halloween costumes, so in a moment of inspiration, I held their hands as they stood on the arm of an easy chair. Each time they made a rhyme, they got to leap to the carpet below. They adored the game with these hyperactive rules and constantly begged me to play.

On my own, I'd discovered that my boys were kinesthetic learners, which means they like to learn with their bodies. (Actually, most young children are kinesthetic to some degree or another, as you've probably noticed.) This can mean a child needs to move around while thinking or use his fingertips to absorb meaning.

How to play to their strengths: Don't get impatient if your child can't sit still for more than one book at a time. Better yet, let him act out a story as you read along. When he reads or colors, don't worry if he sprawls out on the floor. If he's comfortable, he'll be more likely to pay attention.

You might help your child make letters out of play dough or hop out the alphabet. "Active learners are easy to spot because they always want you to show them," says Allison Jackson, a mom of two in Bulverde, Texas. "My youngest, who's definitely a kinesthetic learner, is always saying, 'That's too many words!'"

In 2002, the University of North Florida's Rebecca A. Marcon reported on a comparison between three diverse preschool models The first was child-initiated, including lots of free exploration of interests. Next was the academically directed approach, focusing on early curriculum material. The third was a "combination" approach.

Marcon writes, "By the end of their sixth year in school, children whose preschool experiences had been academically directed earned significantly lower grades compared to children who had attended child-initiated preschool classes. Children's later school success appears to have been enhanced by more active, child-initiated early learning experiences."

