

Toy Blocks Make Math Geniuses!

Building More Than Just Blocks| BY India Burgess

How much money would you invest in a toy that could help your child develop:

- motor skills and hand-eye coordination
- spatial awareness
- a capacity for divergent, creative thinking
- social skills
- and language skills

No, this isn't a gimmick for you to buy the latest tablet or a high tech piece of equipment. This has been around for decades and it's usually overlooked. Toy blocks! Stop raising your eye brow - I'm serious! Toy blocks may not be flashy, loud, or even considered a "smart toy," but researchers feel it has a huge impact on child development.

ParentingScience.com makes it clear that the evidence is in the research. Check out all that children can benefit from by simply playing with blocks!

Spatial Skills

"Several studies have reported links between spatial awareness and construction play. The kids who showed more interest in construction-- and built more sophisticated structures--performed better on a standardized test of spatial intelligence."

Math Skills

"Block skills has been linked with math skills, too. In one study, the complexity of a child's LEGO play at the age of 4 had long term predictive power: More complex play during the preschool years was correlated with higher mathematics achievement in high school, even after controlling for a child's IQ."

Creative/Divergent Problem Solving

"Convergent problems have only one correct solution. Divergent problems can be solved in multiple ways. Because kids can put together blocks in a variety of ways, block play is divergent play. And divergent play with blocks may prepare kids to think creatively and better solve divergent problems."

Cooperative Play

"Research suggests that kids become more friendlier and more socially savvy when they work

on cooperative construction projects. For example, autistic kids who attended play group sessions with toy blocks made greater social improvements than kids who were coached in the social use of language."

Language Development

"In a study sponsored by Mega Bloks, researchers gave blocks to middle and low-income toddlers. The kids ranged in age from 1.5 to 2.5 years, and were randomly assigned to receive one of two treatments." The treatment group received 80 interlocking plastic Mega Bloks and the control group didn't have any. The parents in the treatment group encouraged block play and the control group parents received no instructions. After six months, the treatment group children received higher scores on their vocabulary, grammar, and verbal comprehension. Through researchers are unsure of what triggered these results, the proof is in the statistics.

...Is it just me, or do you have the sudden urge to go play with blocks, too?

References:

Parenting Science. (n.d.). The benefits of toy blocks. Retrieved from <http://www.parentingscience.com/toy-blocks.html>