

## **CHILDREN'S MUSEUM PUBLIC INFORMATION BROCHURE**

Your goal is to design a brochure that could provide useful information to a parent. You have been assigned one of eight questions that a parent might have about child development. **You should find and read 4-6 empirical papers on the topic and then condense this material into a format that would be easily accessible to a parent. Note that to identify 4-6 papers you want to read and cite, you might need to read the abstracts of 10-14 papers. You've been given a keyword to search and the name of one of the leading authorities on the topic. A good strategy is to read their work and then look at the abstract of either additional studies on the topic by this author or studies they cite.** Note, that this is very different from the critical response paper. Instead of carefully discussing the methods of a particular study, you need to decide for yourself what findings are important and well supported by the literature. These main points should then be communicated in a way that is clear and substantive, but not laden with experimental details.

The brochure should be **1,000 words or less**. You will submit a draft of this and then be given feedback and asked to revise it for a grade and final approval. The top 3-5 brochures will be sent to the Boston Children's Museum and if approved will be made available to the public.

### **Requirements:**

- Find 4-6 empirical papers on your assigned topic (see above and we can help you with this)
- Synthesize into easily understandable, informative text (<1000 words)
- Incorporate text and visual aids into three panel brochure  
(we will give you some examples of good text and layouts)
- You are required to submit a rough draft of this project for comments.
- Make revisions
- Submit final version.

### **Important Dates:**

**Session 13:** Rough drafts due in class

**Session 18:** Drafts returned

**Session 21:** Final drafts due in class

My four-year-old has an imaginary friend he calls “Stuffie”. He talks to it all the time and I get yelled at if I step on Stuffie at breakfast or forget to give Stuffie a cereal bowl. Should I worry about him? This has lasted for several months.  
(*search imaginary companion, Marjorie Taylor*)

1. My 2-year-old is really smart. She can count to 14. But when I ask her to give me 3 crackers (or 3 pens, or 4 crayons, or whatever) she just gives me a handful, (although she reliably can hand me 2). I’ve tried and tried to teach her numbers larger than 2 but she still doesn’t get it. Why can she count to 14 but can’t figure out what numbers mean? Should I worry that she has some form of math dyslexia? (*search number, Susan Carey*)
2. I heard that newborn babies look at faces. My baby’s six weeks old and while she sometimes looks at me, she doesn’t seem to have a real “preference” for faces. She’d rather look at ceiling fans or blinds. Should I worry? (*search face perception, Mike Frank*)
3. I am a cardiologist and I have published several papers on heart disease. My four-year-old daughter just insisted, to my face, that girls couldn’t be scientists, only boys could. I’m her mother. She knows what I do for a living. How could she possibly think this? (*search essentialism, Susan Gelman*)
4. My daughter-in-law talks baby talk to her 4-month-old (real words but in a cutesy, high-pitched voice). I keep telling her that she is risking language delays if she keeps that up and that she should talk to my granddaughter properly, in a normal tone of voice. Am I right? (*search motherese, Fernald & Nelson, Hirsh-Pasek*)
5. My husband speaks Arabic and I speak English. We have been talking about having children and hope to raise them to be bilingual but I’ve heard that children raised with two languages have language delays. Is that true? (*search bilingualism, Bialystok, Hakuta*)
6. I know there was a lot of controversy about the “Baby Einstein” tapes but what about foreign language DVD’s? Neither my wife nor I speak a second language but we’d really like our child to be comfortable in another language. We’re thinking about playing tapes of Sesame Street in Spanish for our 12-month-old. Will he have an easier time learning Spanish later if we keep this up for the next couple of years? (*search social interaction phonetic learning, Patricia Kuhl*)
7. My fifth grader seems to have low self-esteem. I keep telling her she’s smart and praising her all I can but whenever she has a choice, she always chooses easy assignments instead of hard ones. She even sometimes exaggerates her test scores to make them seem better than they are. My brother’s a psychologist and he says I should praise her efforts not her intelligence. I do that sometimes but I also want her to know she’s smart. What should I do? (*search praise for intelligence, Carol Dweck.*)

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