



## Understanding a Child's Love of Order

As parents and teachers we are concerned about doing the right things with our children. When our children go through difficult periods, we can spend nights tossing and turning about what can be the matter.

As our tools can be friend or foe, depending on how we use them, it can be helpful if we understand the innate development characteristics of children under the age of seven.

Children are born with special affinities that aid their development. Over the next few weeks we will be examining these characteristics of the young child that help us know that a child is following normal development or is encountering difficulties where adult help is necessary. Children who are on-track with their development display all or most of the following: love of order, love of work, deep spontaneous concentration, attachment to reality, love of silence and working alone, sublimation of the possessive instinct, power to act from real choice not just curiosity or impulsivity, trust and obedience, independence and initiative, as well as spontaneous self-discipline.

The young child possesses a love of order that adults sometimes trample all over, because as we become older this sensitivity is less central to our lives and learning. Learning success for the young child, though, depends on this connection and understanding of order.

Brain research is showing that during the first six years of life the neural matter of the brain is growing at a tremendous rate. The brain creates neural pathways with the sensory information it is acquiring.

We might liken this process to a footpath being created at a new school by students walking across campus. The most direct paths are created over time becoming, wider, deeper and at some point are paved to make clear connections between buildings. As certain sensory pathways are trod in the brain, future access is being almost guaranteed by the children's repetition of experiences, driven by a love of order.

Classification of objects and experiences in the child's environment are also forming. Making connections of similar qualities among objects is an important skill for adult thinking. Examples of the types of classifications the children are making follow: These are wooden objects. These are all the items we need to bake a cake. These are all the materials we need to build a house. Adults who lack critical thinking skills also do not have an ability to classify objects effectively.

It is the child's innate sense for finding and creating order that helps build later logical thinking.

As adults, we disrupt a child's sense of order mainly by being unaware of this order, by changing the child's environment, which includes people, nature and ideas, as well as objects, and by not giving the child enough time to explore and orient to the surrounding world.

For the child with a strong sense of order changing a seemingly insignificant object in the child's environment may create great anxiety. Rearranging the dining room furniture might provoke a crying jag in a two-year-old. When we are aware of the child's sense of order we can be on the lookout for behavioral changes and try to connect them to changes in the child's surroundings. Mom or Dad wearing a new outfit or new cologne may be enough to put a three-year-old out of sorts.

Not having enough time to explore prevents our children from tapping into their inborn sense of order that promotes positive brain development. Being taken from event to event or being distracted from exploration through television or computer usage are but a few of the many ways we disrupt our children's sense of order.

Help your child's natural development by being aware of the importance of a child's innate love of order.