

Why Kids Ask “Why?”

(NAPSA)—Understanding why kids ask “why?” helps parents connect with their children.

Experts say such inquisitiveness—which can include questions about the physical world, feelings and relationships, and even about change and loss—helps children learn and grow.

“Parents should actively encourage their youngsters’ curiosity,” says educational consultant Dr. Renee Cherow-O’Leary. “Asking questions indicates that children are noticing the world around them. They are listening to others talk and developing language to formulate their own understanding of what they see.

“It is important,” she adds, “for parents to respond to questions and answer them appropriately when they are asked.”

But what if you don’t actually know why the sky is blue or why puppies have tails?

Not to worry.

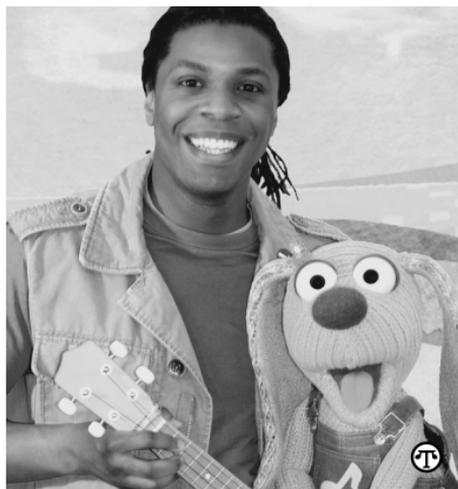
It’s less key that you answer directly, experts say, than it is that you respond in a calming voice that lets your child know you’re paying attention.

A Question Of Fun

Parents and children can have fun seeking out the answers to questions at the library or even online, but not every question has to have an answer. Children can be encouraged to answer their own question (as in, “That’s a great question! Why do *you* think the sky is blue?”). And parents can also use informal learning opportunities at places like puppet shows, museums or parks to help stimulate a child’s thinking process.

Research shows that certain TV shows may help, too—but the key is to encourage children to “actively watch” by questioning and learning about what they see.

For instance, a new program from PBS KIDS SPROUT called



PBS KIDS SPROUT’s “The Let’s Go Show” encourages preschoolers to inquire about their world.

“The Let’s Go Show” encourages children ages 2 to 5 to ask questions that help Miles and Banjo navigate their way through various adventures.

The characters help kids learn about science as they wander through “Wonder Why Valley,” encourage good nutrition in the “Sprout Diner Field,” and inspire kids to make creative crafts at home with their parents and caregivers. The Association of Children’s Museums, a professional service organization representing more than 350 children’s museums around the world, provides child-friendly and scientifically accurate explanations for “The Let’s Go Show” experiments on SproutOnline.com.

“The show creates a unique opportunity for preschoolers to invite their families into their world to share meaningful and playful moments together,” says Andrew Beecham, senior vice president of programming for PBS KIDS SPROUT.

The program airs from 3 to 6 p.m. ET between episodes of Sprout’s other curriculum-based programs. For more information, visit SproutOnline.com.