

## LTE – Baby Einstein Times Article

Letter to the Editor

August 8, 2007

In response to: 'Baby Einstein': a bright idea? (8/7/07)

As a pediatrician, I feel compelled to draw attention from the important finding from the University of Washington baby DVDs and videos study ('Baby Einstein': a bright idea?, 8/7/07) and to an initiative that can have tremendous benefits for our youngest children. Learning occurs through interactions; not from the passivity of watching a video. Research has proven the obvious: Children are born learners; parents are children's first and most important teachers; and quality early education is vital to subsequent success in school and in life. We have the benefit of this research that unequivocally demonstrates that the brain undergoes the most critical and rapid growth and development in the earliest years, from prenatal to Pre-K. Everyday in my practice I see the difference that quality early education makes for my youngest patients, including notable increases in language development and vocabulary size. We can dramatically improve outcomes for our youngest children by providing them with linguistically-rich, interactive early learning experiences. While the majority of brain development occurs before the age of five, we continue to make our greatest educational investments in children over 5 and miss a critical window of opportunity during which small investments reap major long term benefits. Replacing videos with supported parents and quality early education programs may indeed be the formula for creating a generation of "Einsteins"; ready to succeed and make substantial contributions to society at large.