

Figure 9.2 Tips for Parents to Support Their Children at Home

I. Ask questions:

- A. Why do birds make nests?
- B. What materials do birds use to make their nests?
- C. How does electricity help us?



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II. Have children make predictions:

- A. Looking in the newspaper, online, and/or on mobile phones, predict the weather for the next 2 days.
- B. Ask children to predict how tall the plant will grow by the end of the week.
- C. Go out and fly a kite with your child. While flying the kite, ask how high the kite would fly.

III. Start collecting actual materials and objects to use and to identify patterns, colors, textures, similarities, and differences:

- A. These collections can include seeds, leaves on the ground, Snapple caps, Kid Scoop pages, short articles from the science section of the newspaper, etc.
- B. They can also be pictures, graphs, and diagrams from magazines and newspapers (*USA Today* includes many graphs).
- C. They can record sounds. Use a mobile phone or recorder to capture environmental sounds such as dogs barking, birds chirping, cats meowing, wind blowing, and rain falling. Parents can ask the following questions to develop their children's listening skills as they walk to school or wait for the school bus:

What do you hear?

- Any animal sounds?
- People talking?
- Plants moving?

Can you make the sounds that you heard?

Can you invent a family secret sound, like a series of taps or whistles?

Check out www.calmsound.com for other sounds in nature.

With family members, play the game *Can You Name That Sound?*

IV. Promote observation skills:

- A. Look for differences in shapes, patterns, colors, animals, plants, etc., around the house, neighborhood, and parks.
- B. Search for insects in sidewalk cracks, in the soil, on lights, and on plants (ants, spiders, flies, and ladybugs).

1. Make puppets of these animals out of socks, string, pipe cleaners, and construction paper for body parts using glue and a needle and thread (under your supervision)
 2. Create your own animals (see Chapter 7).
- C. Check out the ants as they move to and from their anthill. What do you see happening? What senses do they use? (Sense of smell; they find their way back to the anthill by smelling the food along the trail.)

V. Focus on changes that take place in nature.

For example:

- A. When plants are in sunlight and are watered, what happens inside them? What is the process called that uses chlorophyll, sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water?
- B. When fall comes, leaves turn yellow and then brown and drop to the ground. What causes the leaves to change color? What is the science behind this change?
- C. When it rains, water runs down hills into the street. What happens to the soil it runs over? Where does it go?



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