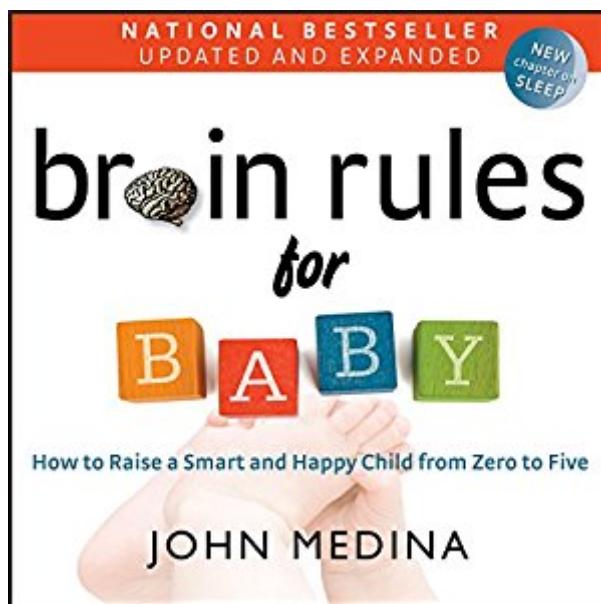


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# Brain Rules For Baby (Updated And Expanded): How To Raise A Smart And Happy Child From Zero To Five



## Synopsis

What's the single most important thing you can do during pregnancy? What does watching TV do to a child's brain? What's the best way to handle temper tantrums? Scientists know. In his New York Times best seller Brain Rules, Dr. John Medina showed us how our brains really work - and why we ought to redesign our workplaces and schools. Now, in Brain Rules for Baby, he shares what the latest science says about how to raise smart and happy children from zero to five. This book is destined to revolutionize parenting. Just one of the surprises: The best way to get your children into the college of their choice? Teach them impulse control. Brain Rules for Baby bridges the gap between what scientists know and what parents practice. Through fascinating and funny stories, Medina, a developmental molecular biologist and dad, unravels how a child's brain develops - and what you can do to optimize it. You will view your children - and how to raise them - in a whole new light. You'll learn: Where nature ends and nurture begins. Why men should do more household chores. What you do when emotions run hot affects how your baby turns out, because babies need to feel safe above all. TV is harmful for children under two. Your child's ability to relate to others predicts her future math performance. Smart and happy are inseparable. Pursuing your child's intellectual success at the expense of his happiness achieves neither. Praising effort is better than praising intelligence. The best predictor of academic performance is not IQ. It's self-control. What you do right now - before pregnancy, during pregnancy, and through the first five years - will affect your children for the rest of their lives. Brain Rules for Baby is an indispensable guide.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a young father who has largely avoided the litany of parenting books on the market, I didn't know

what to expect from John Medina's "Brain Rules for Baby." Purchased on a whim at the recommendation of a friend, the book sat on my shelf, unread, for several months until I realized that my somewhat laissez-faire style of parenting probably wasn't in the best interests of my children - my 15-month-old son and a baby daughter in the oven. Devouring its contents in about a week, I am very glad I had this epiphany sooner than later. Despite being a "developmental molecular biologist" by trade, Medina is a refreshingly savvy writer, opting to avoid much of the jargon that would make the book impenetrable for the untrained layman like me. The book is divided into five clear, topical sections:- Pregnancy (how to help your baby develop while in utero)- Relationship (how to avoid the relationship pitfalls many couples experience post-partum)- Smart Baby (how to optimize your child's brain development and intelligence)- Happy Baby (how to raise a happy, well-balanced child)- Moral Baby (how to help your child develop and nurture their moral compass) Medina does his best to base his recommendations on robust scientific research, which is a plus. As he states early in the introduction, "To gain my trust, research must pass my 'grump factor.' To make it into this book, studies must first have been published in the refereed literature and then successfully replicated . . . Where I make an exception for cutting-edge research, reliable but not yet fully vetted by the passage of time, I will note it" (pp. 3). You can tell that he was very careful about choosing what material to include, later citing his distaste for research based on, "shoddy designs, biased agendas, lack of controls, non-randomized cohorts, too-few sample sizes, too few experiments - and lots of loud, even angry, opinions" (pp. 143). Medina knows his statistics, which makes it easier for me to trust that the recommendations he presents in the text have a solid foundation. Perhaps inevitably, it's hard to read a book like this and not feel somewhat inadequate and/or guilty - especially if you already have kids. I couldn't help but think of how much TV I've already let my little boy watch, how much more I should be talking with him to bolster his language acquisition, etc. Fortunately, Medina readily admits that the ideal is not going to be the reality when it comes to parenting: "A family based on every suggestion in this book is fantasy" (pp. 254). Being a parent has its own learning curve, and we're never going to perfectly implement best practices. But if reading this book only makes me a slightly better parent, it will still have been worth it. So why not five stars? As much as I appreciate Medina's "grump factor" in filtering out unreliable data, there are two important topics I felt should have received much more coverage, considering their relative importance in a child's development: nutrition and music. Aside from nutritional imperatives for pregnant mothers, Medina has surprisingly little to say about nutrition beyond the breastfeeding stage. Perhaps he thought nutrition, one of the most controversial subjects out there, was intuitive? As for music, Medina has a bit more to say, but I have mixed feelings about how he

presented it. I counted only a couple instances where Medina had something positive to say about the effect of music on a child's development, and in both cases music is cited as helping children better perceive others' emotions, increasing their "ability to establish and maintain friendships" (pp. 273). That's it for the positive; otherwise, Medina is fairly snarky in his dismissal of pro-music research, such as the idea that playing classical music will have a positive effect on a child's development. While I respect his good intentions to clear up erroneous myths, I fear that parents might walk away from this book believing that music is non-essential at best, irrelevant at worst - a tragic conclusion either way, in my opinion. Admittedly, I have a bias: I was raised by a mother who has been an advocate for music education and has proclaimed the positive effects of music on the brain for as long as I can remember (she even wrote a book on it: "Good Music Brighter Children"). Music has always been a major part of my life, and I intend to make it a priority with my own children. Considering Medina's admittance early on that, "Most of the data we have [regarding baby brain development is] associative, not causal," (pp. 7) it seems rather irresponsible for him to dismiss much of the positive research regarding music and brain development so flippantly. While music is certainly not a cure-all, I have good reason to believe, both from anecdotal experience and from the positive research I have read, that the effect of music on the brain goes far beyond simply helping children better perceive others' emotions. Despite my qualms, I would still highly recommend this book for prospective parents. What Medina left out does not invalidate what he included. There are some really excellent, practical ideas that all parents could benefit from (the book even closes with a "Practical Tips" chapter that breaks down much of the research into applicable chunks). While I am not an expert on "essential" parenting books, I am inclined to keep Medina's work within arm's length as I work on raising my young children.

It was really good and easy to read, it took me about a week to go through a couple of simple facts that put together can definitely be very helpful raising your child.

i think one of my favorite books about children behavior and I'm a first time mom and read so many of them But this on is right on a top !

A must read for new Fathers (and Mothers too!)

Amazing baby book, so much interesting information and a fascinating read. I read this in 2 days and have been recommending it to all my pregnant friends.

Must read for any type of parent. Not too much research language but definitely research based. Easy to read and understand. Very helpful in understanding the growth of a child.

Really great information, well written, and easy to keep reading! Helpful for understanding your child and what their brain is doing!

It is a good book, highlighting both the science and behavioral aspects of child cognitive development. You'll get good information to plan and sustain a happy marriage and parenthood. Again, Medina has not disappointed.

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