

Parent strategies: Help your child become a young engineer by tinkering with objects and coming up with creative solutions to problems at home and in their world.



WHAT

Take on a Challenge

WHY

Things don't always work the first time we try them. Thinking like an **engineer** teaches us that it's normal and good to look for many ways to **solve problems**. It's important for kids to see they can **solve** complex and challenging **problems** if they keep trying new ideas.

HOW

- **Design a solution** to a problem at your house. For example ask, "How can we fix this broken object?"
- Help your child select materials to **build a fort**. Say, "Let's see if we can make a cozy space to read under using chairs and blankets."
- Play with **puzzles** for a challenge. Say, "This is tricky. How should we start with the edges or a part of the picture?"
- Pretend you're an engineer. Try to build a tall **sturdy building** with blocks or Legos. "How can we make this building stronger so it won't fall in an earthquake/tornado/etc..."



WHAT

Test and Repeat

WHY

It's important for children to see that things don't turn out the same way every time we try them. We can learn more by **repeating** the same test over and over again to see what happens. This helps your child learn to stay engaged and **curious** until the end!

HOW

- Challenge your child with an **obstacle** course. Set up materials and say, "I'm going to see how fast you can hula hoop, then jump over an object, and walk with a pillow on your head." Then ask your child to repeat the obstacles and think of ways to do it more quickly.
- Praise your child for solving **real world problems**. Say, "Wow, you came up with a creative way to clean up that spill!"
- Use **toy cars and ramps** and see how you can make them move farther. Ask, "What can we do to make this doll's car go all the way across the carpet?"



