

The 7 Golden Rules for Mentors



1. **Be curious and mindful.** Keep a good eye on what the child wants to create, on how he feels. "Why is he asking me this? How does he feel? What is the child's face telling me?" Don't focus on the answer but on understanding the question.
2. **The child is competent.** He knows what he wants and he has the resources to do so. If he looks undecided, be patient. You can help him, suggest alternatives, but the child has to find its own solution.
3. **Be on the side, not up front.** Intervene only at the child's request. Help him overcome any technical difficulty, but ask what he would do before giving the "right" answer.
4. **We like mistakes.** Encourage the child to do whatever he sets his mind to, without worrying about errors. You can learn something new and surprising from every mistake. After all we make mistakes too, don't we?
5. **Be encouraging.** Let the child act autonomously and don't fail to provide positive feedback. If you tell him what he is doing correctly, he will be able to repeat it. Encourage any attempt and empower his skills. He should feel the goal can be reached. This is more important than the final result.
6. **Never say NO.** Every phrase can be turned around to be positive. "You shouldn't have done this" will become "Try to do it like this".
7. **Have fun!** Playing is a very serious activity: you have to be prepared, focused and motivated. Your passion and enthusiasm will come through more than a thousand words.

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