



“If we give our children everything, we deprive them of aspirations.”

—Frank Sonnenberg

Radiology Parents

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I’m sure everyone is familiar with the phrase, “helicopter parent.” The parent who always is hovering nearby, observing their kids in all interactions, notably the potentially bad ones, to be able to quickly intercede—although some might say “butting in” or perhaps interfering and blocking. We also have “stage moms” (pardon the sex exclusion there; I’m certain there are “stage dads” also), who angle their kids toward singing, acting, modeling, performing in beauty pageants, etc.

How about “radiology parents”?

The radiology parent has it in their head that their child will grow up to be a radiologist. They know the ground. Maybe they are radiologists themselves. Maybe they are doctors who think radiology is the best chance for their kids to have normal home lives (HA!). Let’s look at the activities of the radiology parent at some milestones as they mold their little future image-viewing MD.

Pre-natal

Takes extra vitamin A for vision. Naturally.

Daily fetal US examination. The fetus shows a tendency to perfectly align for the transducer and hold still at just the right time. Seems to be angling to look at the monitor. Parents save each and every image.

Suggested in utero reading is any physics text.

Infancy

It’s important to make sure the baby is fine with the dark. A disrupted sleep schedule is just fine for the radiology infant.

Mobile over the crib is model brains, skeletons, and Dictaphone microphones.

Crib light projects chest films, head CTs, and gray-scale abdominal US images. All normals.

Pre-school

Parents reinforce toddler to speak in short phrases and make only major points.

There is no such thing as too much TV.

Important to begin getting the little tyke used to eating wherever they are playing.

Encourage the child to answer questions from playmates with several options in order of likelihood: “Possible considerations include milk and/or cookies but can’t exclude candy.”

Middle school

Require child to perform visual exercises several times a day. Key.

Vocabulary-building with the child, paying particular attention to disclaimers, descriptions of uncertainty, and terms for shapes and sizes.

The radiology parent can significantly impact their child’s potential as a budding young radiologist and steer them towards a long and rewarding career. Either that, or a significant amount of social awkwardness and (probably) therapy.

Keep doing that good work. Mahalo.

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