Encourage exploration // If they want to pick up a worm, let them do it and encourage them to ask questions about that worm. Then help them find answers.

Build on interests // What are they passionate about? If your child can’t stop talking about dinosaurs, embrace it! Learn everything there is to learn about every dinosaur.

Help your child set goals // What do they want to learn how to do? How can they get there?

Help your child plan for how they will reach their learning goals // What steps will they need to take to learn the alphabet? Start with the letters in their name. Once they have learned those, add letters that are motivating -- if they love Zebras, they will be motivated to learn the letter Z.

Involve the five senses (sight, smell, touch, hear, and taste) as often as you can into your child’s learning. Write with scented markers, draw letters in sand, do math with teddy graham or pom poms.

It is through learning we can realize our potential. A self-directed learner is motivated and inspired to take initiative for one’s own knowledge. Parents can help their children become self-directed and engaged learners by assisting them in creating, planning for, and reaching goals.