

Exploring Literacy

Studies have shown that reading, writing and oral language abilities develop together, beginning at birth and evolving gradually over time.

We can encourage this development by actively engaging our children while they are still young in interesting and meaningful reading and writing experiences. By learning preschool literacy skills long before they can actually read or write, our children are more likely to experience later success in reading and writing.

Make your child aware of the text around her and help her to interact with it.

HELP YOUR CHILD
TO DEVELOP
PRESCHOOL
LITERACY SKILLS



HOW TO INTRODUCE TODDLERS AND BABIES TO BOOKS

The first—and best—tip for sharing books with young children is to have fun together! If children are engaged and enjoying themselves, they are learning. When children have positive interactions with books, they are developing good feelings about reading, which will motivate them to continue seeking out books and other literacy materials as they grow.

Here are some other ideas for nurturing early literacy skills in your baby or toddler:

A Few Minutes at a Time is OK. Don't Worry if you don't Finish the Story.

Young children can only sit for a few minutes for a story, but as they grow, they will be able to sit longer. Let your child decide how much (or how little) time you spend reading, and remember you don't need to read every page. You may find that your child has a favourite page or even a favourite picture. She may want to linger there for a while; and then switch books or activities. Babies may just want to mouth the book, that's okay! When you let your child explore books in the ways that interest her, the reading experience will be more meaningful.

Talk or Sing About the Pictures.

You do not have to read the words to tell a story. Try “reading” the pictures in a book for your child sometime. When your child is old enough, ask him to read the pictures to you!

Let Children Turn the Pages

Babies cannot yet turn pages on their own, but an 18-month-old will want to give it a try, and a 3-year-old can certainly do it alone. Remember, it’s OK to skip pages!

Show Children the Cover Page

Explain what the story is about. If you have an older toddler, ask them to guess what the story might be about.

Show Children the Words

Run your finger along the words as you read to them, from left to right.

Make the Story Come Alive

Create voices for the story characters and use your body to tell the story.

Make It Personal

Talk about your own family, pets, or community when you are reading about others in a story.

Ask Questions About the Story, and Let Children Ask Questions Too!

Use the story to have a back-and-forth conversation with your child. Talk about familiar activities and objects you see in the illustrations or read about in the story.

Let Children Tell The Story

Children as young as 3 years old can memorize a story, and many children love to be creative through storytelling.

Reading to young children is an important way to help them build language skills. It exposes them to new words and ways of using language.

Don’t have an assortment of books at home? Visit your local Public Library to access a wide range of age appropriate reading material.

