



Birth to Three Literacy Kits

Dear Parent,

Being able to read, write, speak and listen are important skills for all people as they grow up. We used to think that while young children needed to learn to listen and talk, reading and writing didn't start until first grade. However, from studying many, many children over the years, we have learned that the foundation for all four of these literacy skills (listening, talking, reading, and writing) begin while a child is still an infant and toddler.

In fact the experiences that your child has right now will impact his or her later ability to read, write, spell, and express thoughts. As a parent, the most important thing that you can do to promote your child's development of literacy skills is to read, read, read!



Every day make it a point to read to your child. Find a comfortable and quiet spot away from the television where you and your child can enjoy this special reading time together. Choose books with bright, appealing pictures and read them many times. After you read a book, go back and talk about it with your child. Point out pictures or events and describe them in different words. Point out key characters or actions.

As your child gets older increase the amount of time you spend reading to him or her. Think about ways to make your child an active participant in the reading time. Let your child choose the books you will read each night. (By the way don't worry if the same book is chosen over and over. Children love repetition and it actually indicates your child is paying attention to and learning about the book. Research tells us that some children want to hear their favorite stories more than 200 times!)



We have put together a series of Literacy Kits to give you ideas and books to use. Included in each kit is a toy or some other item that you can use with the story to help your child become an active participant. It will also help you begin to see that your child understands the meaning of the story. You

and your child can play with the toy to make what you just read more meaningful. Use some of the same words from the story as you play. For example you might have a book about farm animals and a toy that includes farm animals. Read the book. Then get out the toy and repeat some of the lines from the book while playing with the toy. Then read the book again and show your child the toy that corresponds with the picture of the animal in the book. Each day vary the routine a little bit, but include enough of the same routine that your child can begin to anticipate what is coming next.

On this page are some indicators of early literacy skills that you may look for as you enjoy these books and their accompanying toys. Happy reading!

Early Literacy Behaviors	Under approximately 15 months of age	After approx. 15 months
<p>Looking and Recognizing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Quieting and paying attention while you read -Beginning to look at pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Looking at pictures -Pointing to pictures -Laughing with glee at favorite part of story or favorite picture -Anticipating favorite pictures or spoken words
<p>Book Handling</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reaching for book (early on this may include mouthing or chewing book) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Helping” turn pages -Positioning the book the “right way” -Turning book to front to ask you to read it again
<p>Picture and Story Comprehension</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pointing to objects seen in book -Looking for or pointing to pictures in book after hearing or seeing something similar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Requesting specific book -Imitating an action seen in a book -Talking about events in a story or book
<p>Story Reading</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Babbling in imitation of reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using real words to “tell” story from book -Tracking the words in the book while you read it aloud -“Pretend” reading while holding book and turning pages