

Enjoy the Moment...

Have Fun, Connect and Wonder, Pause and Wait

Help Your Child Start Off On The Right Foot by... Building Early Literacy Skills

Label Things!

- Say the name of the things that your child is looking at, playing with, or pointing to in books.
- Talk about **action words (falling, growing...)**, **location words (up, on...)** and **describing words (big, wet...)**.
- Helping your child learn new and unique words gives them a GREAT head start for kindergarten, and makes learning to read easier.

Take Turns Talking and Pointing!

- Observe what your child is interested in, and add new information about that.
- Take your turn talking, and **wait** with expectation so your child will know to say something back to you.
- Try it! See how many turns you each can take? **“Strive for Five”** turns talking about the same thing.

Get Down and Turn the Book Around!

- Get waaaaaaay down to your child’s eye level, and turn the book around so that it is between you and your child, facing the right way for your child. Now you can see where your child is looking, and make comments about what your child is interested in, rather than what you *think* your child is interested in.

Does your child pay more attention to you this way? Check it out!

Read with your Child Every Day.

- Read a book at different times of the day, especially if you have a little one who isn’t into books yet. Read less, more often. Rather than reading for long period of time, **read for a shorter** time to develop your child’s interest in books
- **Talk about the pictures** and don’t feel you have to read all the words.
- Ham it up! Have fun! Make lots of sound effects! Talk about whatever makes sense to you.



Put Baskets of Books Everywhere!

- The bedroom, the family room, the living room, the kitchen, the bathroom, and in the CAR!
- **Garage sales, kijiji.ca, and children's used clothing/toy stores are great places to start to build your child's library without breaking your bank account.**
- Visit the **public library** as much as you can.
- Go to www.simcoe.ca/dpt/ccs/early/Printable%20Resources for an excellent set of **booklists**.

Read the same book over and over again!

And use a dramatic pause at the end of a familiar line...

- Repetition helps children to learn more words. The more familiar your child is with a book the more likely he will be to chime in when you pause.
- **Pause** in the same spot when you read a familiar book so that your child can take turns with you (e.g., Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you ____? I see a blue horse looking at ____!)

Show your Child how to Pretend!

- Say, "**Let's pretend that...**" and **get down at your child's level and PLAY!** This helps your children learn to say more words, use longer sentences, and take turns.
- It will also make reading chapter books (without pictures) much easier later on.

WAIT with Enthusiasm!

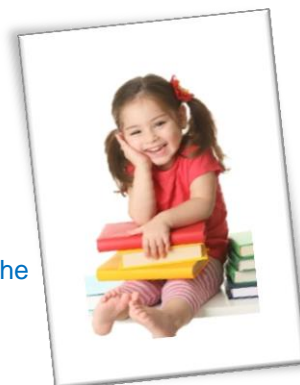
- After asking a question or making a comment, stop talking.
- Look lovingly and enthusiastically at your child, as if you are ready for them to make a comment. Count for 10 seconds before saying anything else.
- Little children need a LOT of time to think about what they want to say, and then to spit it out. Try it! Does giving them lots of time to answer work?

Learn TEN Nursery Rhymes with your Child.

- "Jack & Jill went up the Hill..." "Hickory Dickory Dock..." "Humpty Dumpty..."
- **Nursery rhymes** introduce your child to rhyme and the rhythm of language.
- If your children can say ten nursery rhymes before they enter kindergarten, they will have a much easier time learning to read later on.

Sing Songs (& Do the Actions) with your Child!

- Music makes the words easier to remember, especially when you add actions to the songs.
- Sing lots of songs every day.
- For a great list of words to familiar children's songs, go to www.empowersimcoe.ca/early-literacy/, and click on Early Literacy Booklets for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and School-Agers.



Put Limits on Screen Time!

- The Canadian Pediatrics Society in 2017 recommended **NO** screen time for infants under age 2.
- Research has shown that infants learn words **better from people** than from screens!
- Research has also demonstrated that even when the television is on **in the background**, infants and their caregivers are **speaking less**¹.

1. Masur, E.F. Flynn, V. Olson, J. 2015. The Presence of Background Television During Young Children's Play in American Homes.