

Promoting Literacy:

*A Guide for Home Visitors Who
Support Young Children and Their
Families*



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A Guide for Home Visitors Who Support Young Children and Their Families



Florida's Collaboration *for*
Young Children *&* Their Families

A HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

A partnership of

The Office
of The Governor

Florida Head Start
Association

Florida Institute
of Education
at the University
of North Florida and

Florida Partnership
for School Readiness

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Using this guide	4
Defining literacy	5
Myths about literacy	6
Things we know about literacy	6
Supporting low literacy families and English language learners.....	7
Emergent language and literacy for young children.....	8
Key opportunities to support literacy skills.....	9
Developing spoken language	10
Learning about print and books.....	12
Learning sounds of spoken language.....	13
Learning letters of the alphabet	17
Listening to books	18
Developmental milestones of early literacy	20
Choosing books for infants and toddlers.....	21
Tips for reading aloud.....	22
Quick Home Literacy Checklist	23
Linking family members with literacy services	24
Suggested print resources for home visitors & families.....	27
Definitions	28



Introduction

Your role as a home visitor is to support parents' efforts to be the very best parents they can be. Often you are visiting families who are doing their best, despite difficult and challenging circumstances. By developing a trusting relationship with families you gain their respect and as a result "earn the right to influence". Thus you are well positioned to promote literacy in the homes of the families you serve.

On your visits you nurture and support family literacy skills:

- by modeling and encouraging literacy promoting behaviors and activities,
- by being a careful observer, and
- by helping families create a literacy rich home environment.

You also have an opportunity to encourage parents to address their own educational needs. This enables them to be a model to their children and empowers them to support their children's school readiness and future success.

As you begin to support the family's efforts to promote their children's reading, writing, and language skills, you will gain insight into how the family uses literacy in their day-to-day life. By being a careful observer and asking questions you will gain valuable information to guide your work.

- Are Mom and Dad readers?
- Do they have books and magazines around the house? Newspapers?
- Do you see them reading with their children?
- Do they talk and listen to their children?
- Do they sing with their children?
- Do they play with their children in a developmentally appropriate way?
- Do they provide opportunities for their children to draw and practice "writing?"

If these things are happening in the home, your work is simply to support what families are already doing. If not, this guide provides information and strategies you can use as a home visitor to help families develop literacy promoting behaviors and create a literacy rich home environment for their children.

Using this guide

Although infants and toddlers shouldn't be expected to read, write, and know their ABC's, the information in this guide provides the stepping stones for when the time is right.

This guide contains:

- A definition of literacy and what it means for young children, specifically infants and toddlers.
 - Facts and myths about literacy to help you more clearly understand the many misconceptions surrounding literacy.
 - Practical and useful Home Visitor tips in the sidebar.
 - A description of **five key opportunities** that infants and toddlers need in order to become readers and writers:
 1. Developing spoken language
 2. Learning about print and books
 3. Learning about the sounds of spoken language
 4. Learning about the letters of the alphabet
 5. Listening to books read aloud
- Armbruster, B. Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2003). *A child becomes a reader: Birth through preschool*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.
- Suggestions for working with low literacy families and English Language Learners.
 - A Quick Home Literacy Checklist to help you identify literacy needs in the home environment.
 - Strategies to help families enhance their abilities to support their child's reading, language, and writing skills.
 - Additional literacy resources for you and for families.



Defining literacy



Literacy is more than reading.



It is more than writing.



It is more than talking.

Lit.er.a.cy

includes all the activities involved in speaking, listening, reading, writing and appreciating both spoken and written language.

U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Early Childhood-Head Start Task Force.(2002). *Teaching our youngest*. Washington, D.C.: Author

Myths about literacy

- People who cannot read or who struggle at reading and writing are not smart and learn slowly.
- If someone has completed high school they must know how to read.
- Most people will tell you if they don't understand something or can't read.
- School-like tasks done at home are the keys to successful literacy development.
- People who cannot read are generally foreigners, poor, and minority.



Things we know about literacy

- As a mother's education increases, the more likely she is to read to her child.
- The more types of reading materials in the home, the better the child will read as he or she grows up.
- As the education level of adults improves, so does their children's success in school.
- About half of youth with a history of substance abuse have reading problems.
- More than 20% of adults read at or below a fifth-grade level.
- Reading difficulties affect boys and girls at roughly the same rate.

U. S. Department of Education. (1993). *Adult Literacy In America*.

Supporting low literacy families and English language learners

Literacy begins at home. A child's first experiences with literacy are shaped by the parents' literacy. The family is the beginning point for children to construct meaning about life, culture, language, learning, and literacy. The National Literacy Act of 1991 defines literacy as *an individual's ability to read, write, and speak English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential*. Many families feel it is impossible to meet their goals and reach their full potential due to limited literacy skills. Parents are often motivated by the literacy needs of their children and are thus willing to improve their reading, writing, language, and decision making skills.

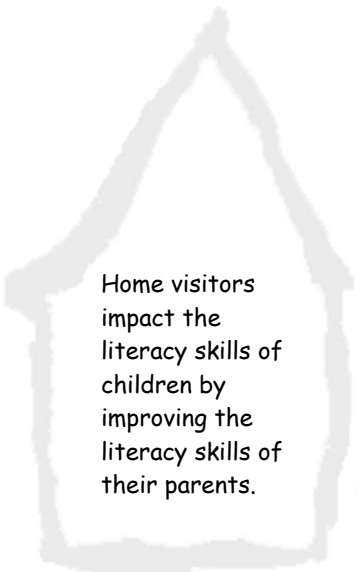
If the family does not read, does not have print materials around the house, and seems to shy away from reading and singing with their children, your first task is to explore why.

Tips for working with families

- Go slowly
- Let them know you care about them and their future
- Listen for an "in" to share with them how improving their literacy skills can make a difference in their life and how you can help their children
- Do what you say you will do--always follow through.
- Be culturally knowledgeable and respectful
- Actively listen
- Be genuine and sincere
- Choose the "right" time to discuss education and literacy and reinforce the discussion frequently

Although the child may be the focus of your visit, improving family literacy is always your goal. In this guide, as we discuss working with parents to promote the emerging literacy of their child, we are simultaneously striving to improve the literacy skills of the parent(s).

Emergent language and literacy for young children



Home visitors impact the literacy skills of children by improving the literacy skills of their parents.

Babies are born ready to learn language. As soon as they are born they can hear and prefer the sound of a soft, gentle voice to other sounds. They quickly recognize their mother's voice and others that are familiar to them. Young infants learn the sounds of their language well before they can speak them. Talking to babies helps promote language development. Language proficiency provides the foundation for future success in reading and school.

Although babies are born "wired" to learn to communicate, they must be in an environment where their caregiver is responsive to their needs as well as their attempts at communication. The ability for a young child to feel confident and competent to develop literacy skills depends greatly on feelings of being loved, cared for, and safe.

Emergent literacy consists of capabilities that lead to the development of traditional reading and writing skills. This continuum of literacy skill development that emerges in the early years is intertwined with all of the areas of healthy development. Learning to read is essentially a social process. For infants and toddlers, a strong bond and secure early relationships provide the foundation for emerging literacy skills.

Key opportunities to support literacy skills

The ability to read and write doesn't begin in Kindergarten - it begins when parents and others talk with, sing to, and share books with young children. By the time children are one year old they are already talking and listening. Learning to read and write is a developmental process. Just as with learning to crawl and walk, there are steps children must go through before becoming a reader. Infants and toddlers will become skilled readers and writers if they are given a few key opportunities early in life. They need opportunities to:

1. Develop spoken language
2. Learn about print and books
3. Learn about the sounds of spoken language
4. Learn about the letters of the alphabet
5. Listen to books read aloud

Armbruster, B. Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2003). *A child becomes a reader: Birth through preschool*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

How can you, as a home visitor, help parents help their children become successful readers and writers?



It is much easier than you might think. Let's look at each of these key opportunities and ways you can support parents' efforts to provide them for their infants and toddlers.

Developing spoken language

When infants and toddlers are spoken with they develop their listening skills and begin to recognize some speech sounds.

"Motherese", a type of talk used by both mothers and fathers which exaggerates sounds and changes in pitch and tone, helps infants' begin to understand language. As home visitors you can encourage parents to talk with their babies and respond to their coos and babbles.

Babies need to be "talked with" and to hear their parents talking with others. Research tells us that children who are not talked with on a regular basis, do not hear others talking, and who are not encouraged to talk often have problems learning how to read. The key for parents is talking *with*-- which involves turn-taking, listening, and waiting patiently to give the child time to respond.

Children must be exposed to a variety of words, affirmative or positive words, and have their sounds or words expanded on. For example, if the child points to a large tree and says "tree", the parent can expand by saying, "Yes, that is a large tree" or "Yes that tree has green leaves." Listening, taking turns when talking, and expanding are important for language development. When babies are talked with and hear sounds they are developing an understanding of the spoken language.

Strategies to support language development:

- "Motherese"
- Responding
- Expanding
- Turn-taking
- Wait time

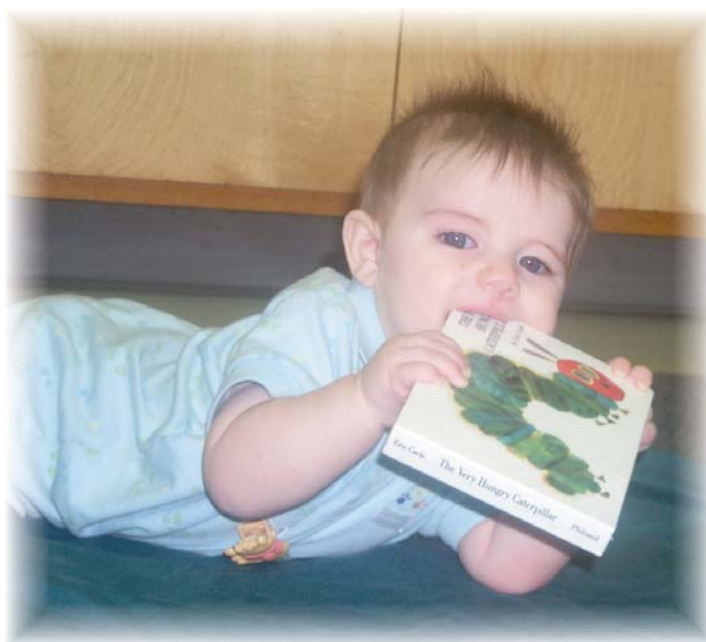
Developing spoken language

Age of child	What mom & dad should know:	What mom & dad can do:
If you are pregnant...	Even in the womb your baby can recognize and respond to the sound of your voice	Talk & sing to your baby; play soft music. Tell your baby how you love her and how happy you will be to see him/her.
If your baby is birth through 2 months...	Talking, reading and singing softly to your baby can have a calming effect and creates brain connections which develop language skills.	Read & talk to your baby every day.
If your child is 2 to 6 months...	Your baby loves to make sounds and will smile at you. Singing nursery rhymes and reading will comfort and entertain her.	Play pat-a-cake and other rhyming, moving games with your baby. Get a book from the library on games to play with babies.
If your child is 6 to 9 months...	By now your baby is developing quite a personality! She's beginning to let you know what she likes and doesn't like.	Name the different parts of your baby's body as you point to them. This game helps your baby learn about his body, understand the connections between words and objects, and practice speaking.
If your child is 9 to 12 months...	Your child imitates sounds and will soon say "Mama" and "Dada."	You are helping your baby learn to talk, so say out loud the everyday things around your baby (like, "door," "tree," "nose," "dog").
If your child is 12 to 18 months old...	Among your child's favorite activities will be picking up objects, dumping toys, stacking blocks, and turning pages.	Talk, read, sing and listen to your child. Communicating back and forth is important to your child's language development. As you and your child do activities together, use words to describe what you are doing, such as, "First I'm putting your shoes on your feet; now I'm tying your shoelaces."
If your child is 18 to 24 months...	Your child will begin to solve problems such as finding a favorite toy in the bottom of the toy box.	Help build your child's confidence and thinking skills, by allowing her time to solve simple problems with your encouragement. Continue to talk, read, sing, and listen to your child.
If your child is 2 to 3 years old...	Your child's vocabulary will grow rapidly during this year. She may be able to handle instructions involving two or more steps, such as "get the book and put it in the bag, please."	Sing, count, talk, listen and READ, READ, READ, to your child.
Used with permission: Oregon Commission on Children and Families. Oregon's Child, Everyone's Business, Developmental Resource Cards. Retrieved September 10, 2003 from http://www.oceb.org/		

Learning about print and books

There are many things infants and toddlers can learn about books and print that will prepare them to be successful readers and writers. Learning how to hold a book and turn the pages and reading from left to right are things children need to know to learn how to read. Children who learn about books and how they are used are developing **print awareness**. Children who successfully develop print awareness have learned that there is a relationship between the words they see written down and the words they hear and speak.

Tasting books is to be expected with infants. Vinyl and board books stand up to the taste test.



Learning sounds of spoken language

When children are read to, spoken with and have opportunities to listen to spoken language, they begin to notice that some words rhyme, that sentences have different words in them, and that some words start with the same letter. When children begin to notice these things about language they are developing **phonological awareness**, which is simply the ability to hear and work with the sounds of spoken language. Once children begin to realize that the words they hear are made up of individual sounds, they are developing **phonemic awareness** because those individual sounds are **phonemes**. Children who have phonological and phonemic awareness have a much easier time learning how to read.

All parents and family members have to do is make sure their children hear the spoken language regularly throughout the day. Daily routines like mealtimes, diaper changes, and toileting provide wonderful opportunities for parents to sing songs, recite nursery rhymes, label body parts, and tell stories. Just encourage parents to make these times positive, joyful, and fun.

Recite or sing rhymes while you are waiting in line at the grocery store, at the doctor's office, or traveling in the car.



Learning sounds of spoken language

Talk to Me!

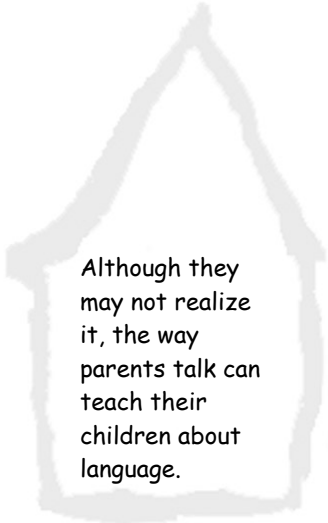
Quality conversations
with children



language development



future success in
reading

A light gray, hand-drawn style outline of a house with a triangular roof and a chimney on the left side. Inside the house is a text box.

Although they
may not realize
it, the way
parents talk can
teach their
children about
language.

Learning sounds of spoken language

A child growing up in a low-income family typically hears one-third to one-half as many spoken words as children in more affluent households. At these rates the low-income child would know about 3,000 words by age 6, while the child of the high-income family would have a vocabulary of 20,000 words. As home visitors, this means that you must work hard with these families to help them see the importance of promoting language development and providing a literacy rich environment for their children while also enhancing their own literacy skills.

Number of words heard at home per hour by 1-and 2-year olds learning to talk:

Low-income child	620 words
Middle-income child	1,250 words
High-income child	2,150 words

Number of words heard by age 3:

Low-income child	10 million
Middle-income child	20 million
High-income child	30 million

To provide a low-income child with weekly language experience equal to that of a child from a middle-income family, it would require 41 hours per week of out-of-home word exposure as rich as those heard by the most affluent children.

Hart, B. & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of young American children*. Baltimore, MA: Brookes Publishing. Retrieved September 10, 2003 from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_talk.html

Learning letters of the alphabet

Singing the ABC song is something most parents do with their children early in life. This is more than just a fun activity, it is a way to help their child learn how to read. Children who know their alphabet and can write the letters of the alphabet before they go to kindergarten learn how to read and write more easily than those who do not. When children know how to say and write the letters of the alphabet they have developed **alphabetic knowledge**.

Identify and name the letters in their names. Point out these letters when you see them in print. Don't try to teach all the letters at once.



Learning letters of the alphabet

*Young children love to
draw and write!*

Support writing development by:

- Setting up a writing center or corner where children have access to a variety of writing materials such as crayons, markers, pens, pencils, paint, magnetic letters, and paper, etc.
- Letting children see parents writing. Children don't have the capability to really begin forming letters until around age four but they love to "write".
- Including children in drawing/writing tasks like creating their shopping list or writing letters to family members in their scribble.

Adapted from Ratclif, N. (1999, April). *Building a literacy foundation*. Paper presented at Meeting the Needs of Infants and Young Children in the Family and Community Conference. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida.



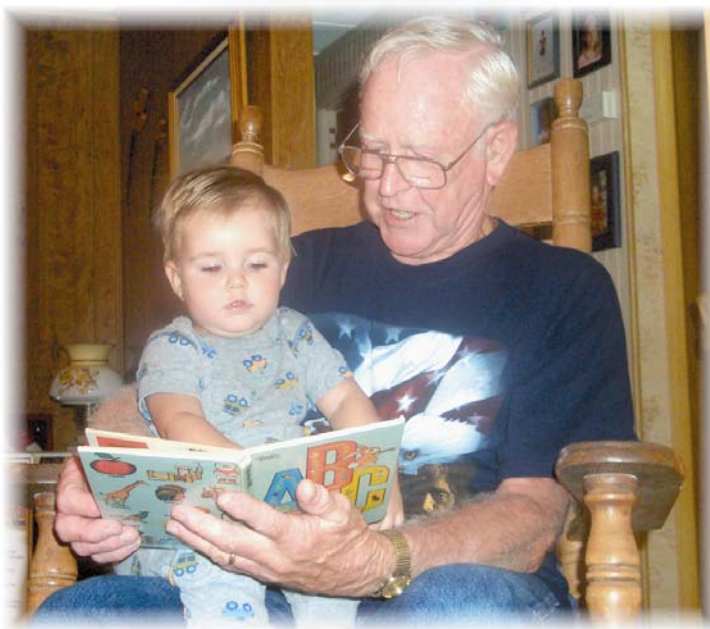
Writing and drawing look a lot alike for young children. When a child draws something, ask them to tell you about their picture. Let them see you write down what they say.

Listening to books

Get comfortable
and make your
story come alive.
Read your book or
tell your story with
expression and lots
of animation.

Shared reading is the single most important activity for developing the technical skills to read and write. Shared reading also enhances a child's thinking and reasoning abilities. (Bus, vanIJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995). Without a doubt, the best way for parents to help their children become readers and writers is to spend time reading with them. When parents take the time to cuddle with their child and read aloud to them, children not only learn new words and about the world around them, they also see the connection between written and spoken language. Shared reading, sitting with a child and enjoying books together, also supports the child's emotional development which is key to his or her success in school. Parents can begin to read to their child even before they are born.

With younger children, the preferable way to read a book is actually to tell it as a story. Parents can just look at the pictures and tell a story. They can ask the child questions about the pictures and the story. Storytelling and sharing of books on tapes are good tools for parents who have limited reading skills.



Listening to books

The joy of sharing books with children is a gift that parents can begin giving even before birth. Many parents enroll in adult education classes to learn to read to their children. Encouraging adults to read children's books provides a way for them to learn and be able to share this gift with their child. Young children who are read to are much more successful at learning to read.

Read me a Story!

30 minutes daily =



900 hours
by age 5

30 minutes weekly =



130 hours
by age 5

Less than 30 minutes weekly =



60 hours
by age 5

A kindergarten student who has NOT been read to can enter school with less than 60 hours of literacy "nutrition". No teacher, no matter how talented, can make up for those lost hours of mental nourishment.

America Reads. (n.d.). *What you can do: Feed me a story*. Retrieved September 10, 2003, from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_feedme.html

Developmental Milestones of Early Literacy



	MOTOR:	COGNITIVE:	WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:
	6-12 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reaches for book book to mouth sits in lap, head steady turns pages with adult help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> looks at pictures vocalizes, pats pictures prefers pictures of faces 	6-12 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold child comfortably; face-to-face gaze follow baby's cues for "more" and "stop" point and name pictures
	12-18 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sits without support may carry book holds book with help turns board pages, several at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no longer mouths right away points at pictures with one finger may make same sound for particular picture (labels) points when asked, "where's...?" turns book right side up gives book to adult to read 	12-18 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond to child's prompting to read let the child control the book be comfortable with toddler's short attention span ask "where's the...?" and let child point
	18-24 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> turns board book pages easily, one at a time carries book around the house may use book as transitional object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> names familiar pictures fills in words in familiar stories "reads" to dolls or stuffed animals recites parts of well-known stories attention span highly variable 	18-24 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate books to child's experiences use books in routines, bedtimes ask "what's that?" and give child time to answer pause and let child complete the sentence
	24-36 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learns to handle paper pages goes back and forth in books to find favorite pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recites whole phrases, sometimes whole stories coordinates text with picture protests when adult gets a word wrong in a familiar story reads familiar books to self 	24-36 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keep using books in routines read at bedtime be willing to read the same story over and over ask "what's that?" relate books to child's experiences provide crayons and paper
	3 years and up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> competent book handling turns paper pages one at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listens to longer stories can retell familiar story understands what text is moves finger along text "writes" name moves toward letter recognition 	3 years and up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask "what's happening?" encourage writing and drawing let child tell the story

Reach Out and Read National Center • 29 Mystic Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts 02144
 Voice: 617-629-8042 • Fax: 617-629-8842 • Email: info@reachoutandread.org • www.reachoutandread.org
 Boston University School of Medicine • Boston Medical Center • Department of Pediatrics

SCHOLASTIC

Choosing Books for Infants and Toddlers

Infants (0-6 months)

- Include simple, large pictures or designs with bright colors.
- Sturdy “Board books” made out of stiff cardboard or fold out books that can be propped up.
- Cloth and soft vinyl books have simple pictures of people and/or familiar objects that can be mouthed, go in the bathtub and be washed and sanitized.

Older Infants (6-12 months)

- Board books with actual photos of familiar objects, including babies.
- Brightly colored board books to feel, hold, and taste of various sizes.
- Books with photos of familiar play or daily experiences.
- Plastic/vinyl books for bath time and outside.
- Washable cloth books of various textures to cuddle and mouth.
- Plastic photo albums of self, and family to hold and mouth.



Young Toddlers (12-24 months)

- Sturdy board books to carry.
- Books with photos of children doing familiar daily experiences.
- Books for bed time experience.
- Books with a few words on each page.
- Books include simple rhymes, songs, or short predictable story line.
- Books include animals of all sizes.
- Plastic photo albums of self, family, and familiar friends to hold and explore.

Older Toddlers (2-3 years)

- Books that tell simple stories.
- Simple rhyming books that they can memorize and repeat.
- Books with photos of children and adults involved in familiar daily activities.
- Books for bedtime experience.
- Books about counting, the alphabet, shapes, colors or sizes.
- Animal books, vehicle books, and books that include other familiar objects.
- Books about saying hello and goodbye.
- Plastic photo albums of self, family, friends and familiar people.

Tips for Reading Aloud



It's ok if your baby or toddler wanders away during a story. She will come back and want to snuggle with you. Young children can only sit for a few minutes for a story, but as they get older, they will sit longer.



Don't worry about reading from the first to the last page. Babies and toddlers like to flip from front to back. They are just becoming familiar with how to hold a book and turn the pages. That is part of learning how to read.



Let your child turn the pages—Babies need board books and help to turn the pages, but three year-olds can do it by themselves.



Talk about the pictures—You don't have to read the book to tell a story.



Make the story come alive—Create voices for the story characters and use your body to tell the story.



Show your child the words—Run your finger along the words as you read.



Ask questions about the story—What do you think will happen next? What is this? Let your child ask questions about the story.



Let your child tell the story.



Have FUN! Children who love books learn to read more easily.

Reach out and Read National Center. *Reading tips*. Retrieved September 10, 2003, from http://www.reachoutandread.org/resource_tip.html



Quick Home Literacy Checklist

Literacy objects available

- ☐ magazines
- ☐ newspapers
- ☐ telephone directory
- ☐ library books
- ☐ recipe & cookbooks
- ☐ children's artwork
- ☐ ABC magnets on refrigerator
- ☐ writing paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ crayons
- ☐ audiotapes
- ☐ shopping list
- ☐ books

Do you observe

- ☐ a special reading area
- ☐ reading to child(ren)
- ☐ drawing with child(ren)
- ☐ talking to unborn child
- ☐ playing games with child(ren)
- ☐ child getting book to be read

During conversation does

- ☐ parent repeat what the baby says
- ☐ parent engage in turn-taking with baby
- ☐ parent label and describe their and child's actions during routine care situations
- ☐ parent use more explaining & less direct instruction
- ☐ parent talk frequently in short, simple sentences
- ☐ parent use open-ended questions that encourage thinking and creativity
- ☐ parent explain household routines as child(ren) are helping
- ☐ parent provide many opportunities for child(ren) to talk
- ☐ parent follow child's lead
- ☐ parent explain meaning of new word when child asks
- ☐ parent include child in dinner conversation

Does parent refer to

- ☐ child's favorite stories
- ☐ reading for fun
- ☐ going to the library
- ☐ going back to school
- ☐ storytelling
- ☐ singing
- ☐ reciting nursery rhymes & poems

Linking family members with literacy services

An important part of your role as a home visitor is to be aware of resources that are available to support the families you serve and to link families to appropriate resources. These may be formal resources such as social service agencies or informal resources including neighbors or family members. Check out your local literacy coalitions to see what they are doing in your community. If getting a GED is a family member's goal, check with the local school boards and/or community college for adult education programs. Helping families get a library card can be the key that opens a whole new world for everyone in the family. Some of the literacy services that may be helpful to your families include: the public library, adult education, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start. Listed below are phone numbers, websites and readings that you might find helpful for yourself and/or the families you serve.

Phone Numbers

National Literacy Hotline (800-228-8813)

Florida Literacy Coalition (800-237-5113)

Websites

American Library Association

<http://www.ala.org/>

The American Library Association is the oldest and largest library association in the world, with more than 64,000 members. It's mission is to promote the highest quality library and information services and public access to information.

Creating a Home Literacy Environment

<http://www.lili.org/read/readtome/homeliteracy.htm>

This article, found on the LiLI (Libraries Linking Idaho) Web site, is excerpted from the University of Idaho Emergent Literacy Project.

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)

<http://www.ciera.org>

The model that underlies CIERA's research efforts acknowledges many influences on children's reading acquisition: readers and texts, home and school, and policy and profession. CIERA's task goes beyond finding answers to persistent problems in reading through research to disseminating those solutions to people who impact children's early reading achievement: teachers, teacher educators, parents, policymakers, and others.

Education News

<http://www.educationnews.org/>

Updated daily, this site provides summaries and links to the top news articles and commentaries on literacy related education news from newspapers across the country and the world. A free online subscription allows you to receive a daily email news update.

Education Week

<http://www.edweek.org>

This online edition of America's top educational newspaper features daily news and current and archived issues of *Education Week* and *Teacher Magazine*.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education

www.ericee.org

ERIC, a national information system supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, provides a variety of services and products covering a broad range of education-related issues.

Family Education Network

<http://familyeducation.com>

Parents visiting this site enter their children's ages to obtain articles, advice and activities.

International Reading Association (IRA)

<http://www.ira.org/>

The International Reading Association seeks to promote high levels of literacy for all by improving the quality of reading instruction through studying the reading process and teaching techniques. The website serves as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of reading research and actively encourages the lifelong reading habit.

Learning First Alliance

<http://www.learningfirst.org/>

The Learning First Alliance is a partnership of 12 educational associations that have come together to improve student learning in America's public elementary and secondary schools. Through the website, visitors may download *Every Child Reading: An Action Plan*, and *Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide*, which provide reading tips for parents, teachers, and schools.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

<http://www.naeyc.org/>

NAEYC is an organization of early childhood professionals and others dedicated to improving the quality of early childhood education programs for children from infancy to age 8. A variety of resources and publications are available, including NAEYC and IRA's 1998 joint position statement, *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*.

National Center for Family Literacy

<http://www.famlit.org>

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) was established to help parents and children achieve their greatest potential together through quality literacy programs.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

<http://www.ncpie.org/>

NCPIE advocates the involvement of parents and families in their children's education, and encourages relationships among homes, schools, and communities to enhance the education of all of our nation's young people.

National Education Association

<http://www.nea.org/parents>

NEA advances the cause of public education. The NEA website has a section for parents about how to get involved in and improve their children's education.

National Head Start Association (NHSA)

<http://www.nhsa.org/>

NHSA is a private nonprofit organization that provides a national forum for the continued enhancement of Head Start services for poor children, from birth to age 5, and their families. The website offers online publications, an update on government affairs, a virtual community, and a schedule of upcoming meetings and events.

National Institute for Literacy

<http://www.nifl.gov>

NIFL is an independent federal organization leading the national effort toward a fully literate America in the 21st century.

National Parent Involvement Network

<http://www.npin.org>

A project of ERIC Digests and the U.S. Department of Education, this site contains an extensive online library of resources on parent involvement.

Reach Out and Read

<http://www.reachoutandread.org/>

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a national, non-profit organization that promotes early literacy by making books a routine part of pediatric care, so that children grow up with books and a love of reading.

Reading Matters

<http://www.nea.org/readingmatters/>

Reading Matters is composed of five main sections: Reading News, Classroom Activities, Home Activities, Expert Advice, and Reading Resources. The site also provides useful research- and practice-based tips and techniques for teaching reading in the classroom and in the home.

Reading Pathfinder

<http://www.readingpath.org/>

This website, developed by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, offers a database of articles, reading programs, local assistance, links, and information related to helping all children read well by the end of third grade. Questions from parents and reading experts were used to organize the website.

Reading is Fundamental

<http://www.rif.org>

RIF programs offer enriching activities that spark children's interest in reading. Every child involved with RIF gets to choose and keep new books, at no cost to the children or their families. Visit this website to learn more about RIF's programs and opportunities to enhance literacy.

Reading Rockets

<http://www.readingrockets.org>

A service of WETA TV/FM, the public broadcasting station in Washington, D.C., Reading Rockets offers a wealth of information for teaching kids to read and suggestions for working with struggling readers.

The Center for the Study of Adult Literacy

<http://education.gsu.edu/csai/site/info.htm>

The mission of the Center for the Study of Adult Literacy at Georgia State University is to engage in basic and applied research and to support an exchange of information among the adult literacy professional community.

The National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE)

www.cal.org/ncle

The National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) provided information on adult ESL literacy education to teachers and tutors, program directors, researchers, and policymakers interested in the education of refugees, immigrants, and other U.S. residents whose native language is other than English.

The Partnership for Reading

www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading

The Partnership for Reading offers information about the effective teaching of reading for children, adolescents, and adults, based on the evidence from quality research.

U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov>

The U.S. Department of Education's home page features information on numerous subjects including funding opportunities, research and statistics, programs and services, and many online publications.

Suggested Print Resources for Home Visitors & Families

Apel, K. & Masterson, J. (2001). *Beyond baby talk: From sounds to sentences: A parent's guide to language development*. Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing.

Armbruster, B.B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2001). *Put reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read: Kindergarten through grade 3*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy (available online at www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading)

Burns, M.S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Hall, S.L., & Moats, L.C. (1998). *Straight talk about reading: How parents can make a difference during the early years*. Chicago: NTC Publishing Group.

Neuman, S.B., Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (2000). *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Ramey, C.T., & Ramey, S.L. (1999). *Right from birth: Building your child's foundation for life*. New York: Goddard Press.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs. (2002). *Helping your child become a reader*. Washington, DC: Author

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs. (2002). *Helping your preschool child*. Washington, DC: Author

Definitions:

Alphabetic knowledge - The understanding that written letters systematically represent sounds.

Emergent literacy - The view that literacy learning begins at birth and is encouraged through participation with adults in meaningful reading and writing activities.

Family literacy - An umbrella term often used to describe a wide array of programs involving family members and literacy activities. Family literacy focuses on parents and children's educational development to break the cycle of illiteracy.

Literacy - An individual's ability to read, write, and speak English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential.

Phonemic Awareness - The ability to notice and work with the individual sounds in spoken language

Phonological Awareness - The understanding that spoken language is made up of individual and separate sounds (phonemes).

Print Awareness - Knowledge that printed words have meaning and that reading and writing are ways to get ideas and information.

Phonemes - The smallest parts of spoken language that combine to form words.

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America Reads. (n.d.). *What you can do: Feed me a story*. Retrieved September 10, 2003, from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_feedme.html

Ratcliff, N. (1999, April). *Building a literacy foundation*. Paper presented at Meeting the Needs of Infants and Young Children in the Family and Community Conference. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida.

Armbruster, B. Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2003). *A child becomes a reader: Birth through preschool*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

Bus, A., van Ijzendoorn, M., & Pellegrini, A. (1995). Joint book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on intergenerational transmission of literacy. *Review of Education Research*, 65, 1-21.

Hart, B. & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of young American children*. Baltimore, MA: Brookes Publishing. Retrieved September 10, 2003 from http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_talk.html

International Reading Association & the National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1998). Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children. *Young Children*, July, 30-39.

Oregon Commission on Children and Families. Oregon's Child, Everyone's Business, *Developmental Resource Cards*. Retrieved September 10, 2003 from <http://www.oceb.org/>

Reach out and Read National Center. *Reading tips*. Retrieved September 10, 2003, from http://www.reachoutandread.org/resource_tip.html

U. S. Department of Education. (1993). *Adult Literacy In America*.

U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Early Childhood-Head Start Task Force. (2002). *Teaching our youngest*. Washington, D.C.: Author