

**Storytime Programs Based on Research
From Public Library Association and
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's
Early Literacy Initiative**

Early Talkers: Birth to Two Year Olds

It is the responsibility of the library staff to communicate to parents/caregivers their key role with their children in early literacy development, including providing information and the tools to assist them in this role.

What is early literacy?

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write. Young children's early literacy skills are the building blocks for later reading and writing. Children learn these skills before they start school, beginning in infancy. From birth throughout the preschool years, children develop knowledge of spoken language, the sounds that form words, letters, writing, and books. This is the beginning of the abilities that children need to be able to learn to read and write in school.

Research Says	What Parents/Caregivers Can Do	Application to Storytimes♦
<p>Parents are the best "teachers" to get their children ready for learning to read</p> <p>Children who are read to 3 times a week or more do much better in later development than children who are read to less than 3 times a week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young children often have short attention spans but enjoy repeating favorite activities. Parents/caregivers can share these activities frequently for short amounts of time throughout the day. • Parents/caregivers know their children well and can take advantage of when their child is in the "mood". • Early literacy is what children learn about reading and writing before they learn to read and write. Children learn these skills before they start school. • Share books with your children as often as possible. • Share a book with your baby every day. Even just a few minutes is important. • If your child loses interest, try another time. • Visit the library on a regular basis. • Ask the library staff to suggest ways to share books with your children. • Ask the library staff to suggest good books to share with your children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to parents/caregivers: the importance of reading to their children at least 3 times a week that they are the best teachers to get their children ready to read because young children often have short attention spans but enjoy repeating favorite activities. Parents/caregivers can share these activities frequently for short amounts of time throughout the day. that they are the best teachers to get their children ready to read because they know their children well and can take advantage of when their child is in the "mood". • When sharing/reading books explain that books with few or no words and that have simple but interesting pictures are good choices • The younger the child, the more distinct the pictures must be, sharp contrast and clear • Provide books suggestions through booklists/handouts; explain that every board book is not necessarily appropriate for an infant. • Display a variety of books/cassettes/cds appropriate for the parent/caregiver to share with the under-two-year-old • Provide ways (for ex. handouts) for parent/caregiver to continue early literacy activities at home

<p>Vocabulary is knowing the names of things. It is an extremely important skill to have when they are learning to read. Vocabulary begins to develop at birth and continues to grow throughout the child's life.</p> <p>By 12 to 18 months of age, most children begin to talk, and most two-year-olds have vocabularies of 300 to 500 words. Children enter school knowing between 3,000 and 5,000 words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your baby or toddler about what is going on in the environment • Describe what your baby is seeing or doing • Show your baby or toddler things and talk about them • Use sensory-rich, descriptive language, adding adjectives to enrich vocabulary • Use speech that is simple and clear • Encourage babbling and other early attempts at communicating by your baby or toddler • When you speak, leave time for your child to "talk" back • Share books with your baby or toddler frequently • Make the book sharing experience a positive interaction; if it is not, try another time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use these guidelines in your storytime and explain to parents/caregivers the importance of expanding vocabulary: Use specific vocabulary for concrete objects—car, van, truck; fingers, arm, elbow, shoulder. <p>Make connections between concepts and vocabulary; give words tangible experiences; for concrete objects, for actions, for emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model book sharing as part of storytime • Incorporate book sharing between parent/caregiver and child as part of the storytime program; • Use realia to help baby expand vocabulary and to begin the understanding that words/pictures represent real things <p>Communicate this information to parents/caregivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a book with your baby every day. Even a few minutes is important. • Make book sharing a positive experience Share books when parent/caregiver and child are in a good mood <p>Hold child in lap, show baby the book and use an exciting voice</p> <p>Talk and have fun. Touch and love your baby the whole time</p> <p>Watch what your baby does. Let your baby play with the book.</p> <p>Stop for a while if your baby gets upset</p>
<p>Print motivation is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books. A child with good print motivation enjoys being read to, plays with books, pretends to write, asks to be read to, and likes trips to the library.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make book sharing a special time for closeness between you and your baby or toddler • Let your baby or toddler see that you enjoy reading • Point out signs in the environment • Make visits to the library on a regular basis and make them fun outings. • Attend programs for you and your baby or toddler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the <u>enjoyment</u> of reading, using books or big books • Have parents/caregivers join in as you read or repeat after you. • Assure parents/caregivers that it is all right for babies to play with books; they are exploring. Books can be put in toy box; if on a shelf have them cover out • If program is presented outside the library encourage attendees to visit the library; going to the library supports a child's interest in and enjoyment of books. Consider providing an incentive. <p>(continues next page)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with parents/caregivers: Share books when parent/caregiver and child are in a good mood. Positive interactions around books will lead to more regular and frequent book sharing experiences. Conversely, negative interactions make the young child less interested in books and reading. • Have words to rhymes and songs written out so parents/caregivers can follow and children can see. Point to text from time to time as you say the words. • Spend a few minutes of each program having each child and parent/caregiver share a book together. • List of books that are good choices available as a handout.
<p>*Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the smaller sounds in words</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say nursery rhymes and other rhymes to baby or toddler • Sing with baby/toddler • Play music for your baby/toddler • Repeat rhymes and songs so baby/toddler becomes familiar with them and can imitate you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nursery rhymes/rhymes, fingerplays, songs and music in storytimes • Communicate to parents/caregivers the importance of rhymes, songs, and music in language development. In addition to being fun: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Rhyming is the beginning of understanding that words are made up of smaller parts</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Songs and music helps children with rhythm and with breaking words into syllables</p>

- ◆ All examples will not be used in every storytime
- * Added at this level by Montgomery County (MD) Public Libraries

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