

Ages: Birth-1

Well-Child Language and Literacy Tip Sheet



For more information, visit thereadingleague.org/compass/families-and-caregivers

Screen Time Tips

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends **no** screen-based media for children under 2 years, except for video chatting.

Language Tips

Before children talk, they learn receptive language—the sounds of their home language, cadence of voices, and structure of conversation.

Babies learn when you talk with them!

- Talk to your baby throughout the day about what you are seeing and doing:
"I'll get you ready to go for a walk outside. Here's your little coat - let's put your arm through! Here's a soft green hat; I'll put it on your head."
- Respond to the little noises your baby makes.
- When your baby is wide-awake, ask them questions. Even though they can't talk yet, make eye contact, pause like you're waiting for an answer, and then give a response.
- To build vocabulary, point to and name everyday objects the baby is near. Use real words, not "baby talk."



Soft Photo Albums

- Put pictures of relatives, friends, and caregivers in a simple album.
- Talk to your baby about all the people who love them and are part of their family and/or community.

Activity Tips

Sing to your child. Children love rhyme and rhythm, and songs can bring comfort and joy to your home.

Check with your local school district about Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes, which are helpful for both parents and children!



Picture Cards for Babies

- High contrast is interesting to the baby.
- Tell your baby about the patterns, colors, and shapes you see.
- Can be used during tummy time.

Pre-Literacy Skill Tips

Have baby-safe books on straps to attach to strollers and car seats so babies can get used to handling books themselves.

Read to your baby every day to develop a routine.



Baby Safe Books

- Non-toxic board books are made with your baby in mind. They hold up to teeth, moisture, and crumpling.

Literacy Development Milestones

- Responds to your voice during shared book reading (e.g., by smiling, cooing, or turning their head).
- Looks at or shows interest in pictures or books.
- Enjoys read-aloud and singing time with caregivers.
- Makes sounds or facial expressions during book time.