

EARLY LITERACY SKILLS



It is essential to help young children develop early learning and literacy skills. Early literacy skills are defined as skills that a child should be aware of before he/she begins to read or write.

- 1) **Letter Knowledge** – ability to recognize that all alphabets are different from one another, differentiating between uppercase and lowercase alphabets, knowing letter names and sounds.
- 2) **Phonological Awareness** – Recognizing and playing with sounds in words; rhyme recognition.
- 3) **Print Motivation** – being interested in books
- 4) **Print awareness** – recognizing words in a book, noticing print everywhere and can visually track words in a book
- 5) **Vocabulary** – knowing all kinds of words – it becomes much easier for a child to read words that he/she is already familiar with especially when they first begin to read.

Below are some activities that parents can use to enhance these skills in younger children.

Name Games

Play simple naming games with your child. You can ask, “What is This?” or “Where is he/she going?” when you go to the grocery store, go on a walk, or sit and look out the window.

Everyday Words

Talk to your child as you do everyday tasks such as sorting the laundry or thinking about what to cook. Explain the piles of laundry, for example, “Here are the dark clothes and here are the white clothes.” Show your child the ingredients you have for making a meal and name them together.

Nursery Rhymes

Read, sing, or say nursery rhymes from your childhood. Help your child learn them. Point out the parts that rhyme or have words you like to say or hear.

Beginning Sounds

Point out ways words begin or end. Compare words that start with the same sound, for example, tomato and taco. Ask: "Tomatoes and tacos begin in the same way. Can you hear the t in tomatoes and tacos?"

Rhyming Books

Read books with rhyming words, such as those by Dr. Seuss. Let your child fill in the words as you read them again and again.

Make Words

Make magnetic letters available and play with them on a surface such as the refrigerator. Spell simple words for your child and have him or her repeat them.

Picture Menus

With your child, cut out pictures of food and paste them on sheets of paper to make a menu. You might make pages for breakfast, lunch, and foods. Have your child "read" the menu.

Alphabet Books

Make a book that has a page for each letter of the alphabet. The child can draw or find a picture for each letter and paste it on the page. Write the letter on the page for the child or let him or her do it. Staple the pages together to make a book. Read the book from time to time.

Letter Search

Point out words on signs and in stores. Begin a search for the letter that begins your child's name. Read the stop signs and the other traffic signs aloud when you are driving with your child. Find letters on products, on signs, and on television. Match the letters with the child's first or last name. Play "letter of the day," in which you decide on a letter and go on a hunt for it.