

# Reading with Your Baby



It is never too early to introduce books to a child. Not only does it help develop linguistic skills it helps enhance a child's love for learning and a child's budding imagination for new and abstract ideas.

The best part about reading together is the personal moment the child shares with the parent. The child is at ease looking at the pictures or conjuring images in his/her head while the parent reads the book. For most communities it has been proven that reading activities with the child also help improve the vocabulary and literacy skills of the parent.

Here are a few things that you can do to help build your child's literacy skills:

- Read aloud to your baby for only a few minutes at a time.
- Read a little longer as your older baby is willing to listen.
- Point to things in picture books and name them. As your children learn to talk, ask them to "point and say."
- Set aside at least one regularly scheduled time each

day for reading. Make it a part of your toddler's routine.

- Recite nursery rhymes and sing songs. Rhymes help develop a young child's ear for language.

As your child grows older follow these few things that you can do to help build your child's literacy skills:

- Encourage your children to join in while you read. Pause to let them fill in a repeating line.
- Ask open-ended questions, such as "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "Why do you think he did that?"
- Move your finger under the words as you read aloud. This helps preschoolers connect printed words to spoken words.
- Begin teaching the letters of the alphabet, starting with those in your child's name. Make letter-learning fun with markers, colors, glue and glitter.