

Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.

- Emilie Buchwald (1994)

Remember the old saying “children should be seen and not heard”? Research tells us that for children to become readers, they should listen and talk. By the time a child is one year old, they already know about spoken language – talking and listening.

They recognize some speech sounds. They know which sounds make the words important to them. They begin to imitate those sounds. Children learn all of this by listening to family members talk. Even baby talk, which exaggerates the sounds and rhythms of words, makes a contribution to children’s ability to understand language. Children who do not hear much talking and who are not encouraged to talk themselves often have problems learning to read.



Books for Babies to 1 Year

- Thick cardboard pages
- Flexible cloth or vinyl pages
- Small chunky format
- Simple, bright picture books or photos
- Few or no words on a page
- Themes that encourage sounds (farm animals, vehicles, etc...)



Early Literacy Behaviors

Book Handling Behaviors

Physical handling of books such as page turning.

Looking and Recognizing

How children pay attention to books such as pointing at pictures of familiar objects.

Picture and Story Comprehension

Show a child’s understanding of pictures and stories, or an action seen in a picture.

Story Reading

Verbal interactions with books, such as babbling to imitate reading.