

Eyes on



Literacy:

First Steps Toward Reading and Writing



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

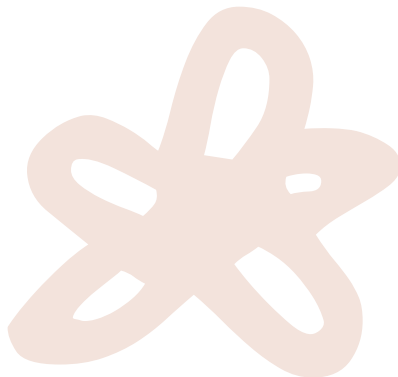
Early Childhood Development



“These fundamental skills are developed in early childhood. They play a role in how well your child will succeed in school.”

What do we know?

- The term “early literacy” refers to skills that are developed during the preschool years and that are required to read and write.
- These fundamental skills are developed in early childhood. They play a role in how well your child will succeed in school.
- Your child will learn the foundations of reading and writing most easily when he is taking part in stimulating activities that are supervised by caring adults.
- Singing songs, reading aloud and playing with letters are all activities that set the stage for learning to read and write and improve your child’s well-being.
- Preschool children who have low language skills are more likely to have problems in school later on.
- Children who have trouble reading at the end of Grade 1 are likely to find reading difficult throughout primary school.
- Strategies that help young children take their first steps toward reading and writing can reduce or even prevent school problems. It is important to integrate these strategies in activities with children at home, child care and kindergarten.



Paying attention to...

What can be done?

... making sure that every day your child has many opportunities to learn while having fun.

- Make daily activities (going places, getting dressed, preparing meals, bath time) more fun with songs that have rhythm and interesting gestures.
- In the park, help your child pay attention to when there is more sand in one pail than in another, etc.

... awakening your child's curiosity so that he is more ready to learn.

- Play word games (rhymes, repetition).
- Thank your child for sharing his discoveries.
- Encourage your child's efforts and recognize his ideas.
- Invite your child to think of subjects for conversation. Ask questions that encourage him to express his ideas and his observations.

... getting your child's full attention in any new learning situation.

- Use voice intonations when playing, show enthusiasm, ask your child questions, invite him to point, name, or move toward whatever interests him.

... your child's need to practice language.

- When talking to your child, remember to wait for a response. Give him enough time to answer your questions or contribute to the conversation.
- When your child speaks to you, repeat what he says. Then add a bit more to the conversation. This will help him see that you are listening to him and share his interests. It will also help him learn more about the topic you're discussing together.



Information

The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development identifies and summarizes the best scientific work on the social and emotional development of young children. It disseminates this knowledge to a variety of audiences in formats and languages adapted to their needs.

For a more in-depth understanding of Language development and literacy, consult our experts' articles in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, available free of charge at www.child-encyclopedia.com.

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