



Building Blocks: The Sequence of Emergent Literacy Skills

What Can I Do for My Child?

For Babies to Toddlers (0–2 years)

- Talk to your child as if he or she understands everything you are saying. Make eye contact, use facial expression, and vary your voice pitch.
- Get down on your child’s level when you interact with him or her.
- Coo and make “baby noises” as they begin to make the sounds themselves. Give your baby many opportunities to make different sounds as you pause and listen.
- Make singing time part of your daily routine.
- Let infants look in mirrors and see their own expressions.

For Toddlers (2–4 years)

- Communication is much more than simply talking. Watch for the nonverbal cues that your child gives you, and respond to those cues.
- Sing songs with actions so that children can act out the song while you sing. Have them say key words and phrases (for example “The Itsy Bitsy Spider”).
- Let your child pick out a book for you to read even if it is a book you have read over and over again. Children learn through repetition. Allow your child to turn the pages as you read.
- Around the house and during your daily outings point out pictures and environment print such as signs and labels.
- Provide an assortment of writing supplies such as crayons, colored pencils, and washable markers.
- Have your child draw a picture. Write a story based on the picture, and make your own picture book.

For Older Children (4–5 years)

- Find wordless books, and have your child tell you the story.
- As you read stories, ask questions about what is happening. Ask children what might happen next. Mix up the storyline, and have your child give new ideas.
- Tell stories about the lives of your family members.
- Give many opportunities for children to write and draw.