

Especially for parents of young children!

Places To Go and People To See

Literacy Learning Experiences

The ordinary routines of babies' lives can be rich opportunities to develop important pre-reading and pre-writing skills. Activities that take infants out into the community with their families are wonderful occasions to support early language and literacy development.

What is the practice?

Many, if not most, everyday family and community activities provide opportunities for little ones to be introduced to places and people that are sources of literacy-rich learning experiences. This handout includes everyday activities for learning communication, language, and the beginnings of reading and writing.



What does the practice look like?

This practice involves helping your child take part in everyday activities that provide opportunities for him to hear sounds and words, see familiar pictures and symbols, and be introduced to reading and writing. This can be something as simple as seeing package labels at the supermarket. It also can be something more organized like infant story times at a public library.

How do you do the practice?

The lists of family and community activities on the back of this page include things that your child might already take part in on a regular or frequent basis. Increasing your child's involvement in the activities and providing guidance and assistance are the heart of the practice.

- Start by identifying which activities your child is most likely to enjoy. The more interesting the activities are to her, the more likely your child will learn communication and language skills by taking part.
- Take part in the activities with your child and try to anticipate what your child is most likely to do. Look for your child to make sounds, point, reach, show excitement, and more.
- Talk about what your child is doing. Describe what your child is looking at, touching, and playing with. Use short, descriptive statements and questions ("You see the kitty, don't you?").
- Respond to all of your child's attempts to communicate or vocalize. Repeat what your child does or says. This tells your child that his attempts to communicate with you are successful.
- Encourage your child to show you what he is doing or looking at. The more your child has opportunities to catch your attention, the better the chance that he will want to "tell you" what he is doing.

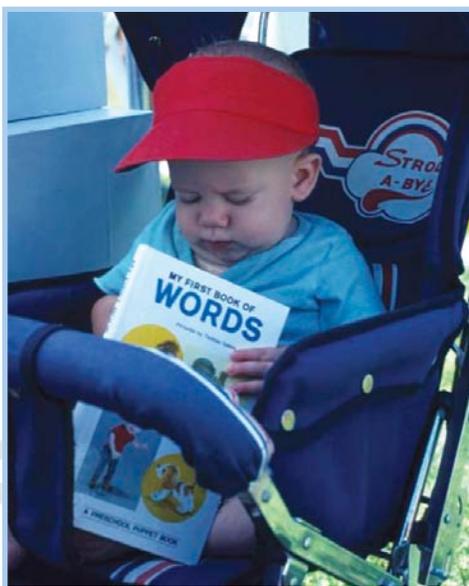
How do you know the practice worked?

- Does involvement in an activity get your child to communicate using gestures or voice sounds?
- Does your child seem to understand or get excited when you use words to describe what he is doing?
- Does your child show more interest in starting or continuing an activity?

More learning during baby's everyday routines

Rhymes & Songs

Three-month-old Tim has become especially interested in any kind of parent-child play that involves rhymes and singing. He gets excited playing **Peek-a-Boo**, hearing **Baby's Eyes**, and listening to his parents recite **Rock-a-Bye Baby**. Tim's mother and father try to include these kinds of play activities in their son's everyday routines. Dad plays **Peek-a-Boo** while changing Tim's diaper. He plays **I'm Gonna Get You** while feeding Tim. Mom plays **This Little Piggy** while dressing and undressing Tim. She recites **These Are Tim's Fingers** while they play on the floor. Tim's day is full of these and more fun-filled language and literacy-learning activities.



On the Town

Bryan and his mother spend time in their neighborhood and community visiting friends, running errands, shopping for food, and enjoying community events. One of 9-month-old Bryan's favorite activities at home is having his mom or dad read him stories. Bryan's mother has found a fun way to make this interest part of what she and Bryan do when out and about. Mom has made a list of places they go to provide Bryan reading and storytelling experiences. Her list includes their local library, bookstore, community recreation center, supermarket, a neighbor's house, and a community theatre. Bryan so much looks forward to what he will get to do next!

Everyday Family and Community Literacy Activities

Scribbling with crayons/magic markers
Playing with alphabet stamps/blocks/letter magnets
Listening to music
Playing Peek-a-Boo or So-Big
Playing finger games and clapping games
Playing rhyming games

Playing with puppets and stuffed animals
Talking on the telephone
Having pretend phone conversations
Visiting the library
Going food shopping
Taking family car/bus rides

