



Factsheet for Families

Supporting Children's Literacy Development

From birth children are developing the knowledge and skills that are important foundations for later literacy development, even though it may be some time before they will develop the skills to read, write and verbally communicate in the conventional way. Families can support the development of children's emerging literacy skills through a variety of daily experiences and activities that show their child that speaking, reading, writing and listening have a real purpose and are an enjoyable part of daily life. It is important to use your child's interests and current level of understanding to guide you in supporting their literacy development.

Supporting babies' and toddlers' literacy skills

- Talk with them about everyday experiences and what is happening around them, including explaining what is happening during routine activities such as feeding, bathing and nappy changing.
- Sing songs and say poems and rhymes with your child.
- Provide simple and sturdy books for your child to explore on their own, and look at books with your child, and talk about the pictures.
- Point out signs, pictures and logos. Older babies and toddlers often enjoy 'spotting' familiar images that relate to things they have seen in books or on television.
- Show children that you enjoy reading with them, and make this a special time for cuddles and one-to-one time. Reading stories can become a part of settling routines such as rest and bed times.

Supporting school age children's literacy skills

- Even when your child can read to themselves, it is important to read books to and with them.
- Give your child support and encouragement to read text in the environment - even when this is actually 'remembering' rather than 'reading'.
- Support your child to use their emerging reading, writing and verbal communication skills for 'real' experiences that interest them, for example, reading and following recipes, writing stories, or developing and performing plays.
- Encourage your child to think about what they read and/or hear, and encourage them to express their opinions and ideas.

Supporting preschool age children's literacy skills

- Read books regularly with your child, and be prepared to read the same book over and over again. Give them encouragement and opportunities to choose stories.
- Choose books that help your child to predict what will happen in the story, for example, repetitive or cumulative texts, rhymes, and illustrations that clearly show what is happening in the story.
- Use pauses when reading familiar or predictable stories and encourage your child to 'fill in the gaps'.
- Point out examples of print in the environment, and ensure that there are a range of printed materials, such as books, newspapers and magazines in your home environment.
- Allow your child to see you using writing and reading for pleasure and for practical and real purposes.

To find out about how our service supports your child's literacy skill development, please speak to:

or telephone: