

Early Literacy Developmental Skills

Early or emergent literacy refers to the set of skills that children will use to learn to read, write and communicate.

Your child is growing and developing in many ways, physically, mentally and socially. From birth, your child is also developing early literacy skills. Here is a guide of skills for each age level and suggestions to promote your child's early literacy development. **REMEMBER**, all children are unique and develop skills at different times.

Age Group	Early Literacy Developmental Skills	What can you do to help
Baby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks intensely at pictures for several minutes Reaches for and explores books with hands and mouth Uses both hands to manipulate the book to make the pages open and close Holds book with help Tries to turn several pages at a time Looks at pictures, vocalizes and pats picture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer your baby cloth books or rubber books. Let the baby touch, feel and chew! Point out the pictures and name the objects Babies like books with large photos of people's faces Play social games with your baby (e.g., peek a boo)
Toddler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to carry book and turn pages well Labels a particular picture with a specific sound Enjoys being read to and enjoys looking at books Asks for favourite books to be read over and over again Pretends to read Names familiar pictures Relates events in books to his/her own past experiences Can join in and recite phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask child to identify pictures in a book (e.g., Show me the baby) Ask child to help you turn the pages Share books about concepts such as up and down, in and out, big and little and so on... Repeating favourite books, games and songs helps build literacy skills
Preschooler 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes familiar logos and signs (e.g., stop sign) Remembers and understands familiar stories Knows how to use a book (holds/turns pages one at a time, starts at beginning, points/talks about pictures) Looks carefully and makes comments about books Fills in missing words/phrases in familiar books Talks about past events Tells simple stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for books that appeal to their interest Talk about what is happening and have your child tell you about the story Ask questions about a book as you read it-"What will happen next? Why is the boy smiling?" Read regularly to your child. This is one of the best ways to ensure future reading and writing success.