Stages of Early Literacy Development





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.

By 3 months

- Shows interest in contrast between light and dark
- Makes eye contact with pictures in book
- Looks intensely at pictures for several minutes



What can you do to help?

- Introduce your baby to books right from birth
- Sing lullabies and recite your favorite nursery rhymes
- Offer books that have faces or contrasting colors

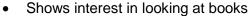
By 6 - 12 months

- Enjoys music, songs and rhymes
- Reaches for and explores books with hands and mouth
- Sits on lap and holds head up steadily
- Shows preference for photographs of faces
- Uses both hands to manipulate the book to make the pages open and close

What can you do to help?

- Hold your infant comfortably with face-to-face gaze
- Follow your infant's cues for "more" and "stop"
- Point to and name pictures

By 12 - 18 months





- Tries to turn several pages at a time
- Looks at pictures, vocalizes and pats picture
- Points at pictures with one finger
- Enjoys tickle, bounce and nursery rhymes
- Identifies pictures in a book (e.g., Show me the baby)
- Able to carry book and turn pages well
- Holds a crayon or pencil in fist and marks paper, scribbles
- Labels a particular picture with a specific sound
- Enjoys being read to and enjoys looking at books
- Relates an object or an action in a book to the real world

What can you do to help?

- Respond to your baby's request to read books
- Let the baby control the book
- Be comfortable with your baby's short attention span
- Ask "where is the...?" and let her point to it
- Go visit your local library or family resource centre, they offer great story time for little ones.





By 18- 24 months

- Asks for favourite books to be read over and over again
- Pretends to read to dolls or stuffed animals
- Names familiar pictures
- Fills in the words in familiar stories
- Holds books the right way and turns pages easily, Relates events in books to his/her own past experiences
- Notices print rather than just the pictures



What can you do to help?

- Relate the books you read to your toddler's experience
- Use books in routines and bedtimes
- Ask "what's that"? and give your toddler time to answer
- Pause and let your toddler complete the sentence in books with repeating of familiar lines

By 24 -36 months

- Goes back and forth in books to find her/his favorite part or pictures.
- Recites whole phrases and sometime the whole book
- Is able to find the work that matches the pictures
- Protest when you get a word wrong or skip a page
- Recognizes familiar logos and signs (e.g., stop sign)
- Starting to recognize some words that rhyme

What can you do to help?

- Keep using books in routines
- Read to your toddler at bedtime
- Be willing to read the same story over and over again.
- Ask "What's that?" and "Where else have you seen that?"
- Relate book to your toddlers experiences
- Do other activities that relate to the book

By 3 years

- Pretends to read familiar books aloud
- Knows how to use a book (holds/turns pages one at a time, starts at beginning, points and talks about pictures)
- Looks carefully and makes comments about the book and story
- Fills in missing word/phrases in familiar books that are read aloud
- Talks about events that relate to a story
- Understands that print carries a message and is aware of the function of print – in menus, signs

What can you do to help?

- When reading the story, ask "What's happening?" or "How do you feel?"
- · Create a reading corner for your child
- Always have books that your child can get to
- Sing songs and do rhyming games

REMEMBER, all children are unique and develop skills at different times.

When it comes to developmental markers of any sort, the most important thing is:



The fact that a child reaches a marker or passes through a stage is almost always more important than the age of the child when he or she does it.

You know your child best. If you have any concerns make sure to speak to a professional.

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