



Early Literacy: Building Healthy Brains

For Infants: 0 to 14 months

Questions about this booklet or the information within it?

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Healthy Brain Development

Experiences

Face to Face

Playing

STORIES

Syllables

Segmenting

Reading

Well-Being

Nursery Rhymes

Blending

Cuddling

Engagement

Library

What is Early Literacy?

Early Literacy refers to the experiences that take place *before* a child can successfully read and write

Expression

Bonding

Singing

Talking

Disconnect to Connect

Limiting Screen Time

Listening

Waiting

Pretending

Phonemic Awareness

Belonging

RHYMING

Talking

Play Dates

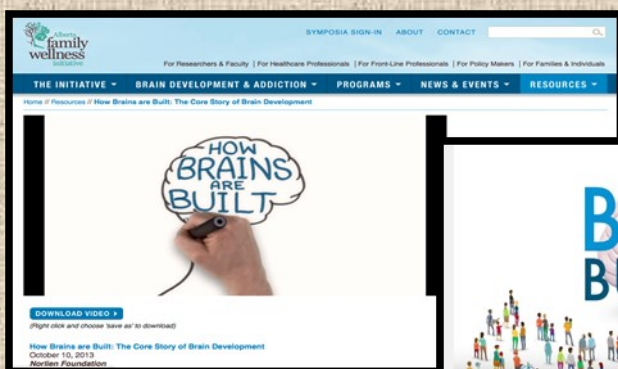
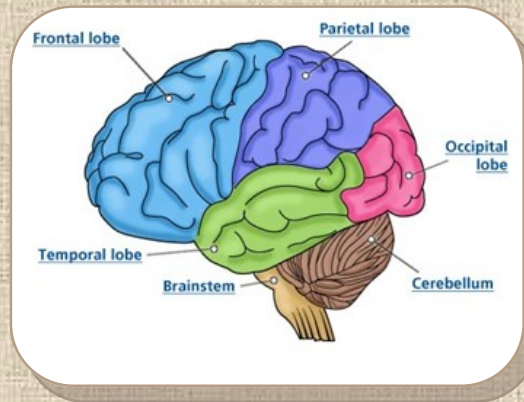
Commenting

Having Fun

Repetition

Following Your Child's Lead

To Help Babies Be Ready to Learn... We Need to Help them Build Healthy Brains!



YouTube



Go to YouTube, and search “Alberta Family Wellness” for a group of 17 different 3-4 minute video clips.

- ⇒ How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development
- ⇒ Executive Function
- ⇒ Toxic Stress
- ⇒ Serve & Return
- ⇒ Brain Architecture

“The major difference between brain development in a child versus an adult is a matter of degree: *the brain is far more impressionable* (neuroscientists use the term plastic) in early life than in maturity...”

This plasticity has both a positive and a negative side. On the positive side, it means that young children’s brains are more open to learning and enriching influences. On the negative side, it also means that young children’s brains are more vulnerable to developmental problems...”

(Retrieved from: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/frequently-asked-questions-about-brain-development> Dec. 7, 2018)

<https://empowersimcoe.ca/early-literacy/>

BUILD BABY'S BRAIN WITH BOOKS!

From birth to 12 months it's all about...
SOUNDS, WORDS & FEELINGS!

NEWBORN

Start now! A nurturing family routine of reading aloud every day from birth will help your baby feel safe, loved, and ready for school and life.



Read aloud slowly and exaggerate sounds.

Babies love books with real pictures and bold contrasts.

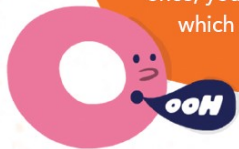


1-2 MONTHS

Smile! Babies love faces and making emotional connections with people. They look, they listen, they feel...

2-5 MONTHS

Oohs and ahhs! Your baby's coos are more than cute – they're vowels! By practicing with loved ones, your baby is figuring out which sounds are important to learn to talk.



Chewing books is normal - a sign of teething! Let baby explore sturdy board books by holding them, turning pages and even tasting!

5-9 MONTHS

A babbling brook...

Through all of that drool, you'll hear "mama," "dada," "baba," and more. Your baby is practicing consonants, new sounds to help them talk.



Reading aloud together is so important to develop your baby's vocabulary. Beyond favorite books, pick new ones that provide new words and experiences. All of these words add up quickly!

9-12 MONTHS

Talk to me! Like magic, all of a sudden your baby starts putting those coo (vowel) and babble (consonant) sounds together to make wonderful words!



DR. JOHN S. HUTTON

Pediatrician & Assistant Professor
Cincinnati Children's Hospital
Reading & Literacy Discovery Center

It isn't just baby's body that is growing this first year — baby's brain is developing even more rapidly! Give your baby the best start by reading aloud every day, for at least **15 MINUTES**, right from birth.



Learn more at
[ReadAloud.org](https://www.readaloud.org/)

Enjoy the Moment...

Have Fun, Connect and Wonder, Pause and Wait

Help Your Child Start Off On The Right Foot by... Building Early Literacy Skills

Label Things!

- Say the name of the things that your child is looking at, playing with, or pointing to in books.
- Talk about **action words (falling, growing...)**, **location words (up, on...)** and **describing words (big, wet...)**.
- Helping your child learn new and unique words gives them a GREAT head start for kindergarten, and makes learning to read easier.



Take Turns Talking and Pointing!

- Observe what your child is interested in, and add new information about that.
- Take your turn talking, and **wait** with expectation so your child will know to say something back to you.
- Try it! See how many turns you each can take? **“Strive for Five”** turns talking about the same thing.

Get Down and Turn the Book Around!

- Get waaaaaaay down to your child's eye level, and turn the book around so that it is between you and your child, facing the right way for your child. Now you can see where your child is looking, and make comments about what your child is interested in, rather than what you *think* your child is interested in.
Does your child pay more attention to you this way? Check it out!

Read with your Child Every Day.

- Read a book at different times of the day, especially if you have a little one who isn't into books yet. Read less, more often. Rather than reading for long period of time, **read for a shorter** time to develop your child's interest in books
- **Talk about the pictures** and don't feel you have to read all the words.
- Ham it up! Have fun! Make lots of sound effects! Talk about whatever makes sense to you.



November 2019

Put Baskets of Books Everywhere!

- The bedroom, the family room, the living room, the kitchen, the bathroom, and in the CAR!
- **Garage sales, kijiji.ca, and children's used clothing/toy stores are great places to start to build your child's library without breaking your bank account.**
- Visit the **public library** as much as you can.
- Go to www.simcoe.ca/dpt/ccs/early/Printable%20Resources for an excellent set of **booklists**.

Read the same book over and over again!

And use a dramatic pause at the end of a familiar line...

- Repetition helps children to learn more words. The more familiar your child is with a book the more likely he will be to chime in when you pause.
- **Pause** in the same spot when you read a familiar book so that your child can take turns with you (e.g., Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you ____? I see a blue horse looking at ____!)

Show your Child how to Pretend!

- Say, "**Let's pretend that...**" and **get down at your child's level and PLAY!** This helps your children learn to say more words, use longer sentences, and take turns.
- It will also make reading chapter books (without pictures) much easier later on.

WAIT with Enthusiasm!

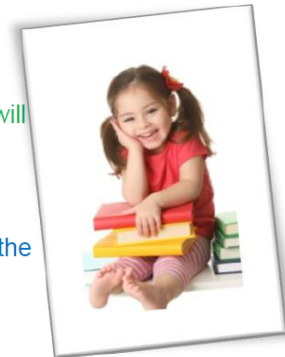
- After asking a question or making a comment, stop talking.
- Look lovingly and enthusiastically at your child, as if you are ready for them to make a comment. Count for 10 seconds before saying anything else.
- Little children need a LOT of time to think about what they want to say, and then to spit it out. Try it! Does giving them lots of time to answer work?

Learn TEN Nursery Rhymes with your Child.

- "Jack & Jill went up the Hill..." "Hickory Dickory Dock..." "Humpty Dumpty..."
- **Nursery rhymes** introduce your child to rhyme and the rhythm of language.
- If your children can say ten nursery rhymes before they enter kindergarten, they will have a much easier time learning to read later on.

Sing Songs (& Do the Actions) with your Child!

- Music makes the words easier to remember, especially when you add actions to the songs.
- Sing lots of songs every day.
- For a great list of words to familiar children's songs, go to www.empowersimcoe.ca/early-literacy/, and click on Early Literacy Booklets for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and School-Agers.



Put Limits on Screen Time!

- The Canadian Pediatrics Society in 2017 recommended **NO** screen time for infants under age 2.
- Research has shown that infants learn words **better from people** than from screens!
- Research has also demonstrated that even when the television is on **in the background**, infants and their caregivers are **speaking less**¹.

1. Masur, E.F. Flynn, V. Olson, J. 2015. The Presence of Background Television During Young Children's Play in American Homes.

Songs & Rhymes for Babies

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star



Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,
(put hands up, wriggle fingers)

How I wonder what you
are. *(finger to head, thinking)*

Up above the world so high,
(point up)

Like a diamond in the sky, *(make a
diamond up high)*

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

(put hands up, wriggle fingers),

How I wonder what you are.

Jack and Jill

*(Have baby lie on back while you
move your fingers up their legs)*

Jack and Jill went up the hill,

To fetch a pail of water.

Jack fell down, and broke his

crown, *(move one down)*

And Jill came tumbling after.

(move other finger down)



Pat-a-cake

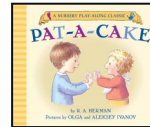
Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, Baker's
Man.

Bake me a cake as fast
as you can.

Pat it. And roooooooll
it. And mark it with a /
k/

(say first sound in child's name)

And put it in the oven for
(Christopher) and me.



This is the Way We...

This is the way we 'put on our
socks, put on our socks, put on our
socks,

This is the way we 'put on our
socks,

Early in the Morning!

This is the way we
'stretch and bend,
stretch and bend,
stretch and bend.

This is the way we
'stretch and bend
Early in the Morning!

(Etc. - sing this song with anything
you and baby do)



Peas Porridge Hot

*(clap hands together, then tap hands
on baby's knees)*

Peas porridge hot. Peas porridge
cold.

Peas porridge in the pot, nine days
old.

Some like it hot. Some like it cold.

And some like it in the pot, nine
days old.



Songs & Rhymes for Babies

If You're Happy and You Know It!

If you're happy and you know it,
clap your hands!



If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!

If you're happy and you know it,

and you really want to show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
clap your hands!

- ▶ Stamp your feet!
- ▶ Shout hooray!
- ▶ Do all three!

The Wheels on the Bus

The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,

'Round and 'round, 'round and 'round,

The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,

All through the town.

The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish...

The people on the bus go up and down...

The horn on the bus goes Beep! Beep! Beep!...

The babies on the bus go wah, wah, wah...



The Moon is Round

The moon is round, as round can be. *(circle baby's face)*

It has two eyes, *(point to eyes)*

A nose, *(point to nose)*

And a mouth, *(point to mouth)*

Just like me. *(Beat hand on chest 2x)*



Roley Poley

Roley Poley, Roley Poley *(roll one arm around the other)*

Up up up, *(push hands up, up, up and say SLOWLY)*

Up up up! *(repeat - emphasise each word)*

Roley Roley, Poley. Roley Roley Poley.

Down Down Down *(repeat - emphasise each word)*

(Repeat, but push hands OUT and IN)

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom!

Zoom, zoom, zoom!

(lift baby go up, up, up - FACING YOU)

We're going to the moon *(bring baby back down)*

Zoom, zoom, zoom! *(same as above)*

We'll be there very soon.

If you'd like to take a trip,

(bounce baby to the left, then right)

Climb aboard my rocket ship.

(bounce baby to the left, then right)

Zoom, zoom, zoom! *(lift baby up)*

We're going to the moon.



Songs & Rhymes for Babies

Itsy-Bitsy Spider (or Eensy-Weensy)



The itsy-bitsy spider went up the waterspout.

Down came the rain, and washed the spider out.

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain,

And the itsy-bitsy spider went up the spout again.

(After, do the Great Big Spider using a slow, very deep voice, and big actions. Then, repeat with the Teeny Weeny Spider, using a tiny high-pitched voice, and itty bitty actions)

From Wibbleton to Wobbleton

From wibbleton to wobbleton is fifteen miles.

(bounce baby on left knee two times, then right knee two times, then in the middle three times)

From wobbleton to wibbleton is fifteen miles (repeat)

From wibbleton to wobbleton, (keep bouncing left to right)

From wobbleton to wibbleton,

From wibbleton to wobbleton is fifteen miles.

(repeat same bouncing)

Hickory Dickory Dock

(Hold elbow on hand, and move arm like a clock)

(Whisper "tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock" a few times first)



Hickory dickory dock, (tick tock!)

The mouse ran up the clock (wiggle fingers up moving arm)

The clock struck one, (hold out one finger)

The mouse ran down, (fingers wiggle down moving arm)

Hickory, dickory, dock! (tick tock!)

Five Little Monkeys

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed (put fingers of right hand into palm of left hand)

One fell off and bumped his head. (pretend to bump head)

Mother called the doctor, (pretend to call on phone)

And the doctor said,

No more monkeys jumping on the bed! (shake finger)

Four little monkeys...and so on.

Songs for the Spur of the Moment!

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

This Little Piggy

Pat-a-cake

Jack and Jill

Head and Shoulders

Itsy-Bitsy Spider

Row, Row, Row Your Boat

I'm A Little Teapot

Hickory Dickory Dock

You Are My Sunshine

This Is The Way We...

Mr. Sun

The Wheels on the Bus

Five Little Monkeys

Baa Baa Black Sheep

Humpty Dumpty

Roley Poley

If You're Happy and You Know It!

Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Suggestion:

Pull this page out of this booklet and post it in your diaper changing area, on your fridge, or in your play room, for example. Having it visible in a place where you spend a lot of time is handy for those 'spur of the moments'!

Songs & Nursery Rhymes Tips & Tricks!



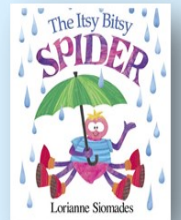
Sing *Row Row Row your Boat!*

But change the first sound in MERRILY, to the first sound in family members' names (e.g., if your daughter's name is Hannah, sing: "Row, Row, Row your boat, gently down the stream... HERRILY, HERRILY, HERRILY, HERRILY, life is but a dream!")



Sing the Itsy Bitsy Spider

Then the GREAT BIG SPIDER (with a deep voice), then the Teeny Weeny Spider (using a high pitched voice), and the Silly Silent Spider! (no voice – just actions)
Let your child fill in the last words!



Make songs part of your daily routine. Sing, "This is the way we _____ (ex: brush your teeth, or get dressed)".



Make important words **stand out**. (*The itsy bitsy spider went UP the waterspout!*)



Leave Off the Last Word in a Familiar Song or Nursery Rhyme!

This may be one of your baby's first words!



Change it Up! Be Silly!

Once your children know some familiar nursery rhymes, have fun and ham it up by changing the words like this: "Jack and Jill went up the hill, to fetch a pail of "PANCAKES"!"



Health Benefits of Singing!

Singing boosts the immune system!

Scientists tested the blood of people who sang in a professional choir in the city, before and after a 60-minute rehearsal. They found that concentrations of immunoglobulin A - proteins in the immune system which function as antibodies - and hydrocortisone, an anti-stress hormone, increased significantly during the rehearsal. A week later, when they asked members of the choir to listen to a recording of the music without singing, they found the composition of their blood did not change significantly.

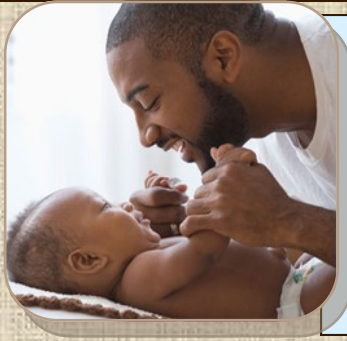
(Journal of Behavioral Medicine December 2004, Volume 27, Issue 6, pp 623-635)



Singing Strengthens Emotional Bonds

Singing is a super-charged way of connecting to your baby. It has the element of human interaction that little ones crave and need for their cognitive, language, and emotional development.

(<http://www.psychologytoday.com/experts/kimberly-sena-moore>)



Singing Can Prevent Issues with Language

Sally Goddard Blythe, director of the Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology, says that not enough emphasis is put on singing in the early years. In fact, she goes as far as to claim that singing to infants can actually help prevent language issues later in life!

Singing Releases Endorphins and is Good for you in SO many ways!

According to Professor Graham Welch, Director of Educational Research, University of Surrey, Roehampton, UK:

Singing releases endorphins into your system and makes you feel energized and uplifted.

People who sing are healthier than people who don't.

Singing can lift your mood and act as an anti-depressant without side effects.

Singing tones abdominal and intercostal muscles and the diaphragm, and stimulates circulation.

Singing makes us breathe more deeply than many forms of strenuous exercise.

Singing improves your mood. It releases the same feel-good brain chemicals as sex and chocolate!

Singing relieves stress and improves sleep.

Singing releases pain-relieving endorphins.

Singing improves posture.

Singing increases lung capacity.

Singing clears sinuses and respiratory tubes.

Singing improves mental alertness.

Singing tones your facial and stomach muscles.

Singing increases our self-esteem and confidence.

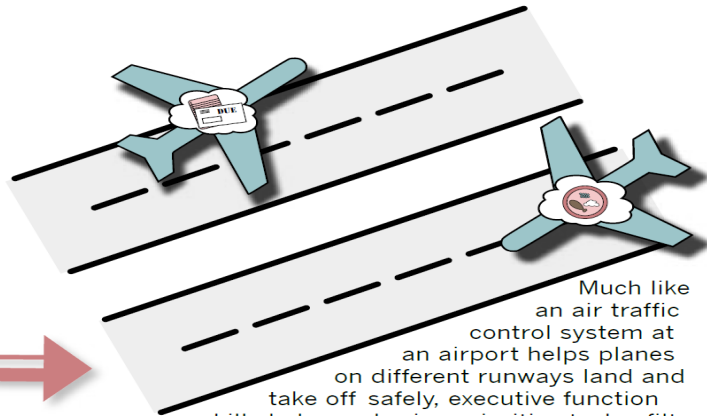
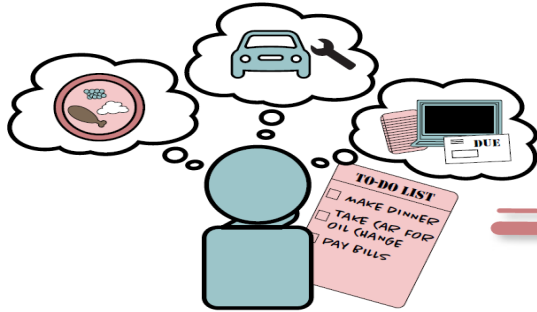


(http://www.singup.org/fileadmin/singupfiles/The_Benefits_of_Singing_for_Adolescents_by_Professor_Graham_Welch.pdf)

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION?

AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

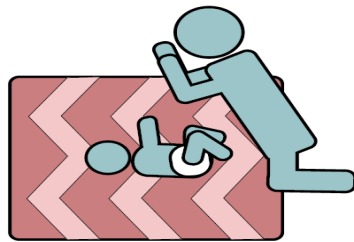
The phrase “executive function” refers to a set of skills. These skills underlie the capacity to plan ahead and meet goals, display self-control, follow multiple-step directions even when interrupted, and stay focused despite distractions, among others.



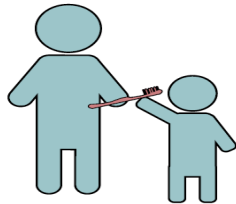
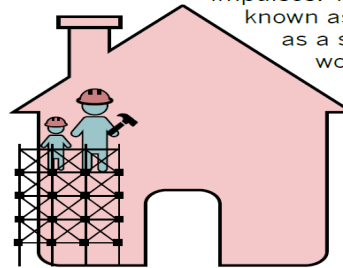
Much like an air traffic control system at an airport helps planes on different runways land and take off safely, executive function skills help our brains prioritize tasks, filter distractions, and control impulses.

NO ONE IS BORN WITH EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS, BUT NEARLY EVERYONE CAN LEARN THEM.

Our genes provide the blueprint for learning these skills, but they develop through experiences and practice. The foundation is laid in infancy, when babies first learn to pay attention. Relationships with responsive caregivers are particularly important at this stage. Something as simple as playing a game of peekaboo can help build the early foundations of working memory and self-control as a baby anticipates the surprise.

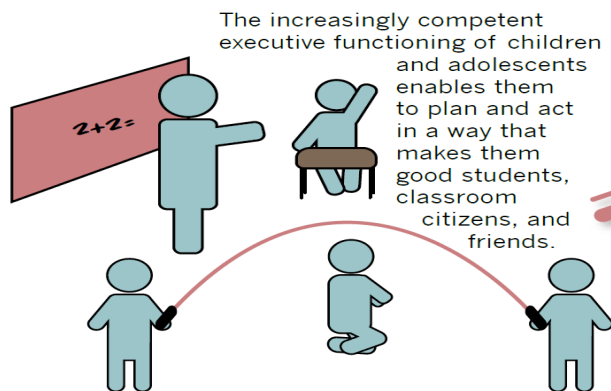


Adults set up the framework for children to learn and practice these skills over time by establishing routines, breaking big tasks into smaller chunks, and encouraging games that promote imagination, role-playing, following rules, and controlling impulses. These techniques are known as “scaffolding.” Just as a scaffold supports workers while a building is being constructed, adults can use these activities to support the emergence of children’s executive function skills until they can perform them on their own.

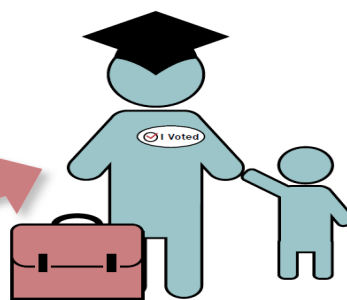


These skills typically develop most rapidly between ages 3-5, followed by another spike in development during the adolescent and early adult years. It takes a long time and a lot of practice to develop them, but, as children’s executive function skills grow, adults can gradually allow children to manage more and more aspects of their environment.

BUILDING CHILDREN’S EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS BENEFITS EVERYONE.



The increasingly competent executive functioning of children and adolescents enables them to plan and act in a way that makes them good students, classroom citizens, and friends.



In turn, this helps them grow into adults capable of juggling a multitude of commitments, such as parenting, employment, continuing education, and civic involvement. Even health is affected, as strong executive function helps people stick to healthy habits and reduce stress. The more a society invests in building the executive functioning of its children, the greater dividends it will see in the future.

Monitoring your Child's Development

Try CDC's FREE Milestone Tracker app today...

Because milestones matter!



Illustrated milestone checklists for 2 months through 5 years



Summary of your child's milestones to share



Activities to help your child's development



Tips for what to do if you become concerned



Reminders for appointments and developmental screening



cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker



Or refer to the following website to access milestones from your computer:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/>



16 by 16

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN AT LEAST 16 GESTURES BY 16 MONTHS



Communication development starts in the first year of life and goes far beyond learning how to talk. By observing early gestures, you can get a critical snapshot of a child's progress.

Research shows the development of gestures predicts language skills 2 years later. Children should be using at least 2 new gestures each month from 9 to 16 months. By 16 months, children should have at least 16 gestures.

16 GESTURES BY 16 MONTHS



Find the First Words Project Online:

<https://firstwordsproject.com/16-gestures-by-16-months/>

<https://empowersimcoe.ca/early-literacy/>

Activities for Babies: Birth-6 months

All of these activities stimulate a baby's senses, which 'wires the brain' to make **learning to read** easier later on.

Check off what you've tried so far.

Get **FACE TO FACE** and...



- ◇ **Sing softly, cuddle, snuggle, kiss, hug, and rock them gently. Talk in a soothing voice.**
- ◇ Smile and try to make them smile, laugh, shriek, chuckle, coo and gurgle.
- ◇ **Play with a rattle. Do they move their head or eyes towards the sound?**
- ◇ Show them black and white pictures with different designs (before 3 months).
- ◇ Play your favourite music and dance with them! Play soothing music during quiet times.
- ◇ **Place baby beside a mirror. What happens? Name their body parts in the mirror.**
- ◇ Leave them alone sometimes. Let them rest and play by themselves for a while.
- ◇ **Let them watch you work around the house. Put them on a blanket on the floor beside you.**
- ◇ Put baby on tummy and a couple of bright toys around them to encourage head lifting.
- ◇ **Put pictures/photos where you change their diaper. Point to the pictures and talk about them.**
- ◇ Make the same sounds that they make. Do they copy you or make sounds back when you talk?
- ◇ **Read a magazine together. They will love the pictures and the crinkly paper.**
- ◇ Gently move their arms and legs in a circle to the rhythm of a song or nursery rhyme.
- ◇ Bundle up and get outside as much as you can. **Talk about what you see.**
- ◇ Roll a ball while baby is on his tummy. Can they follow it with their eyes?
- ◇ Let them smell different foods, soaps, & flowers (some plants are poisonous...be careful).
- ◇ **Play peek-a-boo** with puppets or blankets. Let a small part show. Will they reach for it?
- ◇ Sing songs and nursery rhymes **over and over** again. Babies need a lot of repetition.
- ◇ Read books to them while snuggling. Make your voice go fast, slow, high, and low. Or, sit across from them on the floor and just look at the pictures and label them and talk about them. Find books with real pictures, flaps, and touchy feely things.

Activities for Babies: 7-12 months

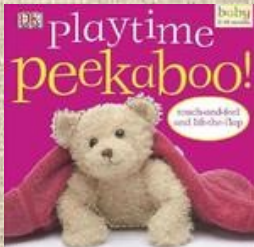
Again, check off what you've tried so far.

Get **FACE TO FACE** and...

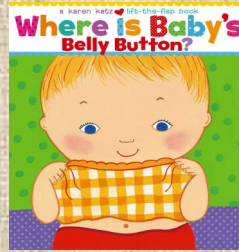
- ◇ Give them a couple of "O" shaped pieces of cereal. Can they pick it up?
- ◇ **Put lots of things in a box (lids, wooden spoons, measuring cups, etc.).** Shake it. **Will they reach into the box to grab the things?**
- ◇ Collect juice lids (with non-sharp sides) & let baby put them in and out of a coffee tin.
- ◇ Get on hands and knees & play chase. Does baby love hearing "I'm going to catch you?"
- ◇ Play "Ring Around the Rosie" with them in your arms.
- ◇ **Clap your hands with them when singing songs and rhymes.**
- ◇ Put lots of pillows on the floor for baby to crawl over and climb around.
- ◇ **Read 'cardboard' books & plastic books so they won't get ruined when baby eats them!**
- ◇ Let baby see *you* reading (newspapers, magazines, books, mail) & WRITING over and over again.
- ◇ **Let baby tear up and crinkle up paper.**
- ◇ Dance together!
- ◇ **Put a favourite toy in a paper bag and close it. Can they open the bag and take out the toy?**
- ◇ Ask baby to hand things to you (or others). Say "please" and "thank-you", but these are not the most important words until later on. Now is the time to label what you are playing with (e.g., spoon!).
- ◇ **Play with simple puzzles.**
- ◇ Explore messy play together!
- ◇ **Ask simple questions. Will baby nod his head "yes" or "no"?** Do they understand their **name**?
- ◇ Help them with their first words. Does baby say "da-da" or "ma-ma" and babble on and on?
- ◇ Let them open, close, empty, bang, and throw things! **This is developmentally appropriate!**
- ◇ **Play peek-a-boo with an object.** Do they look for it - even when they can't see it anymore?
- ◇ **Sing songs and nursery rhymes to them over and over again.** Babies need repetition. And they need to eventually be able **to rhyme to be good readers.**
- ◇ **Look at books together.** Sit directly **across from them, open up a board book** (with real pictures), and **pay attention to what they are looking at** so that you can talk about what they are looking at. Repeat the name of the things in the books, and make simple comments about what they see.



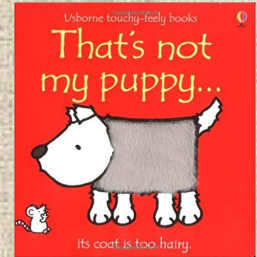
Books for Babies!



(DK Publishing)



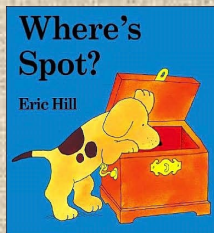
(by Karen Katz, Little Simon)



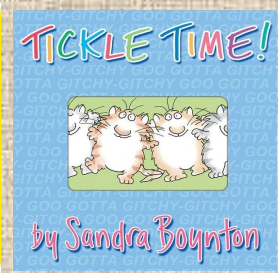
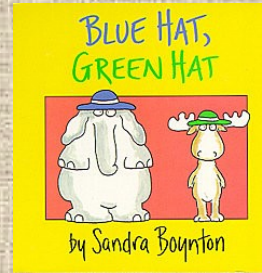
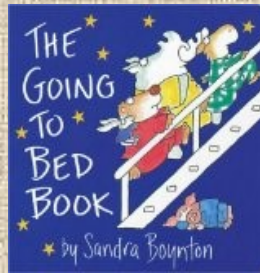
(Usborne Touchy-Feely Books)

Babies love...

- Babies love **photos** of their **family members** and **other babies**
- Babies love **real pictures** (photos) of things that you can **point to** and **name**
- Babies love **sturdy board books** that have **flaps** they can lift
- Babies love **SOUND EFFECTS**
- Babies love things they can **touch and feel**
- Babies love books when you **use your own words** (not always the words from the book)
- Babies love it when you are **enthusiastic with your voice** and **facial expressions**: Make your voice go **up/down, fast/slow, loud/quiet**
- Babies love it when you read books that **repeat the same thing over and over**
- Babies love it when you **get face to face** with them and turn the book around so that you can see where their eyes are looking



Where's Spot? By Eric Hill



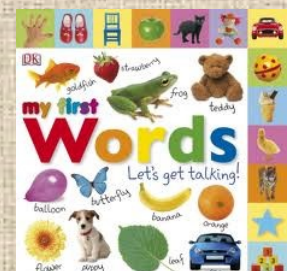
Books by Sandra Boynton



Put a basket of books
in every room!



In addition to board books,
cloth books and bath books are
great for babies exploring
books with their mouths!



And similar books by DK Publishing

Read Aloud 15 MINUTES
Every child. Every parent. Every day.



More than one in three children arrive at kindergarten without the skills necessary for lifetime learning.

Research shows that reading aloud is the single most important thing you can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The number of words that a child knows on entering kindergarten is a key predictor of his or her future success.

LITERACY SKILL BUILDING

Vocabulary. Phonics. Familiarity with the printed word. Storytelling. Comprehension. Reading aloud builds literacy skills.

INSTILL A LOVE OF READING

Your example demonstrates that reading is important, pleasurable and valued.

WHY READ ALOUD?

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

From birth to age 3 are critical years in the development of language skills.

KNOWLEDGE GAINED & SHARED

Books are a pleasure, yes, and they are also informative. You and your child can learn something new as you read aloud.

BONDING

Is anything better than sharing a good book?

More than 15% of young children, 3.1 million, are read to by family members fewer than three times a week.

DON'T GOOD PARENTS ALREADY READ ALOUD DAILY? NO

Only **48%** of young children in this country are read to each day.

Reading 15 minutes every day for 5 years:
27,375 MINUTES

456.25 HOURS

IS 15 MINUTES ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? YES!



Is Screen Time Okay for Babies?

*Screen time includes smart phones, tablets, computers, or television.

This does not include FACE TIME and SKYPE. This kind of "video chatting" can nurture *positive* interactions.



- The Canadian Paediatric Society *does not recommend* screen-based activities for children under 2, and encourages limiting screen time to less than 1 hour per day for 2-4 year olds.

- **Time in front of a media screen does not help babies become ready to learn.** Warm and engaging interactions with parents and other caregivers are what they need to be ready to learn.

- The goal of the first few years of a baby's life is to help him/her develop **language skills**. Screen time has a negative effect on this development – **even when the TV is on in the background.**

- **Be aware of your own screen use habits and change them** if necessary. Heavy use is associated with less talking and less interaction between parents and babies. Research shows that the longer parents are on their screens, the more likely their children are to struggle with behaviour.

- For older children, **avoid screen time before bed or naptime – this can disrupt sleep.**

- **Watching television during meal times can lead to delayed social skills and delayed language skills.** This is mostly because of the conversation that is being missed out on that usually takes place during meal times.



- Research shows that children who have televisions in their bedrooms score lower in school, and yet **20% of Simcoe County children in grade one have televisions in their bedrooms.**

- Avoid using screen time as the only way to calm your child when upset. This could **reduce their ability to calm down on their own when needed.**



Handheld screen time linked with speech delays in young children:

New research presented at the 2017 Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting suggests the more time children under 2 years old spend playing with **smartphones, tablets and other handheld screens**, the more likely they are to begin talking later." Science Daily, May 4, 2017. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/05/170504083141.htm

The best toy for your baby is YOU!

Food Pyramid for Kids' Media Consumption

<https://www.wired.com/story/kids-screen-time-pyramid/>

Although screen time before the age of 2 is not recommended, take a look at this visual below...it's useful information to keep in mind down the road!



1. USE SPARINGLY

Screens Before Bed

Cortisol-spiking content and melatonin-suppressing blue light impair sleep.

Background TV

This reduces the number of words adults utter, potentially stunting children's language development.

Screens During Mealtime

The habit is linked to overeating as well as delayed social and language skills, due to missing out on family conversations.

2. USE OCCASIONALLY

YouTube

To reduce the risk of children stumbling onto inappropriate content, turn Autoplay off and Restricted Mode on.

First-Person Shooter Videogames

While violent media is linked to aggression, boys who abstain from videogames report more social isolation.

Social Media

Most teens say social media helps them feel more connected to friends, although heavy use has been linked to depression and anxiety. Apps like RescueTime can help kids reflect on their screen use.

3. USE MODERATELY

Interactive Ebooks

Ebooks with lots of bells and whistles tend to reduce comprehension but may help children who would otherwise lose interest.

Movies/TV

For age-appropriate content, consult independent review sites like Common Sense Media.

Active TV/Video

Shows like The Wiggles and YouTube channels like Kidz Bop encourage children to dance.

Active Videogames

Older exergaming consoles like Wii and Kinect, and newer games like Beat Saber and Rec Room, can help children break a sweat.

4. USE FREELY

Video Chats With Family

While children age 2 and under have a poor ability to learn from 2D sources, Pediatricians approve of video chats starting at 18 months.

Enjoy the Moment...

Have Fun, Connect and Wonder, Pause and Wait



Frequently asked Questions about Bilingualism



Will speaking two languages with my child cause a language delay?

- No. Research indicates that speaking two languages will **not** cause speech and language problems.
- Research has shown that a child's total vocabulary (when both languages are combined) will be at least the same size as a child who only speaks one language.
- A child's brain can learn more than one language. In many places around the world children grow up learning more than one language at the same time.
- If a bilingual child is delayed in his/her language development, a speech and language assessment is recommended. For more information about when to refer for a speech and language assessment please visit, <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/earlychildhood/speechlanguage/index.aspx>

If my child has a speech/language delay, will speaking two languages make the delay worse?

- No. There is **no evidence** that children with a speech and language delay will be more delayed if they hear two languages.
- Research has shown that children with a speech and language delay who hear two languages will have the same difficulties in both languages.

If I don't speak English well, is it okay for me to speak my native language with my child?

- **Yes!** Some parents speak English to their child even when they don't speak it well. They might believe that speaking to their child in English is necessary for their child to learn English. Research however does not support this view.
- Research has highlighted that it is important for parents and caregivers to speak with a child in the language that feels **natural and comfortable**. Speaking with a child in a language that is not comfortable may have negative consequences for parent-child connections.
- Maintaining your native language may be important for a number of reasons. There may be family members who only speak that language and there may be a risk of losing your native language if it is not used at home.



April 2016

How can I help my child learn more than one language?

- Research says a child needs **repeated** and **consistent** exposure to each language. Some parents use:



- “one parent-one language”: one parent speaks one language to the child; the other parent speaks the other language to the child.
- “one place-one language”: one language is spoken at home; the other at daycare or at school.
- “two languages mixed throughout the day”: one or both parents speak both languages to the child throughout the day.

It all works! No one approach is best. Parents should speak to their child in a way that feels comfortable. The key is to provide children with many opportunities to hear, speak, play and interact in both languages.

What if my child mixes both languages?

- Mixing languages is **not** a sign of language delay or difficulty in learning two languages.
- Mixing languages is **common** for children learning two languages. It is natural and should be expected.

What about putting my child with a speech and language delay in a French Immersion program?

- There is very limited research in this area. It seems that children with language impairments may do just as well in bilingual education settings as in English only settings. Keep in mind that children with language impairments need **more** support with learning language **both** at home and at school.



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Numeracy

Like early literacy, **early numeracy skills**, are an important element of school readiness. What families do naturally every day, such as sorting laundry, counting fingers and establishing predictable daily routines for bed, bath, meal and play times are preparing your baby for future math success.

Play, read, sing and talk to help your baby develop early numeracy skills!

PLAY

- Roll a ball back and forth
- Put small objects inside a box or bucket
- Encourage your child to play fill-and-dump
- Explore and describe shapes and textures
- Move and stack objects
- Place toys at different distances some nearby and others a bit farther (within reach)



READ

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear What do You See?
- Five Little Ducks
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Where's Spot

TALK

- "Your mouth is open, you want more"
- Count out loud the steps you take with your baby
- Count buttons and snaps when changing
- Count fingers and toes while washing
- Label positions – up, down, over, under, beside, behind



SING

- One, Two Buckle My Shoe
- Five Little Monkeys
- Old MacDonald Had a Farm
- Two Little Black Birds
- Itsy Bitsy Spider

Ages & Stages of Numeracy Development

Newborn to 4 months old

- Can tell the difference between a picture of two dots and a picture of three dots.
- Can immediately “see” that there are two or three dots on a page, even though the ability to count is not yet developed.
- Shows surprise when a puppet jumps more times than they are used to seeing.

5 – 6 months old

- Can tell that a jar that is half full of juice is different from a jar that is full
- Shows surprise at three toys when there are only supposed to be two toys.
- Can tell the difference between two large sets of toys if one of the sets is at least twice as large as the other; for example, can see that a set of 12 toys is different from a set of 24 toys.

9 – 12 months old

- Can tell the difference between two large sets of toys even if the sets are almost the same size; for example can see that a set of eight toys is different from a set of ten toys.

12 – 18 months old

- For small sets of blocks, can learn to pick the smaller of the two sets.

For playful age specific activities—as well as videos, information, and more go to:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/let-s-talk-about-math-early-math-video-series>

Everyday Fun with Addition and Subtraction

Everyday Fun with Counting

Everyday Fun with Spatial Awareness

Have Fun with Math: Playful Parent-Child Shape Activities

Parent-Child Activities That Support Pattern Learning

Everyday Fun with Measurement

1

2

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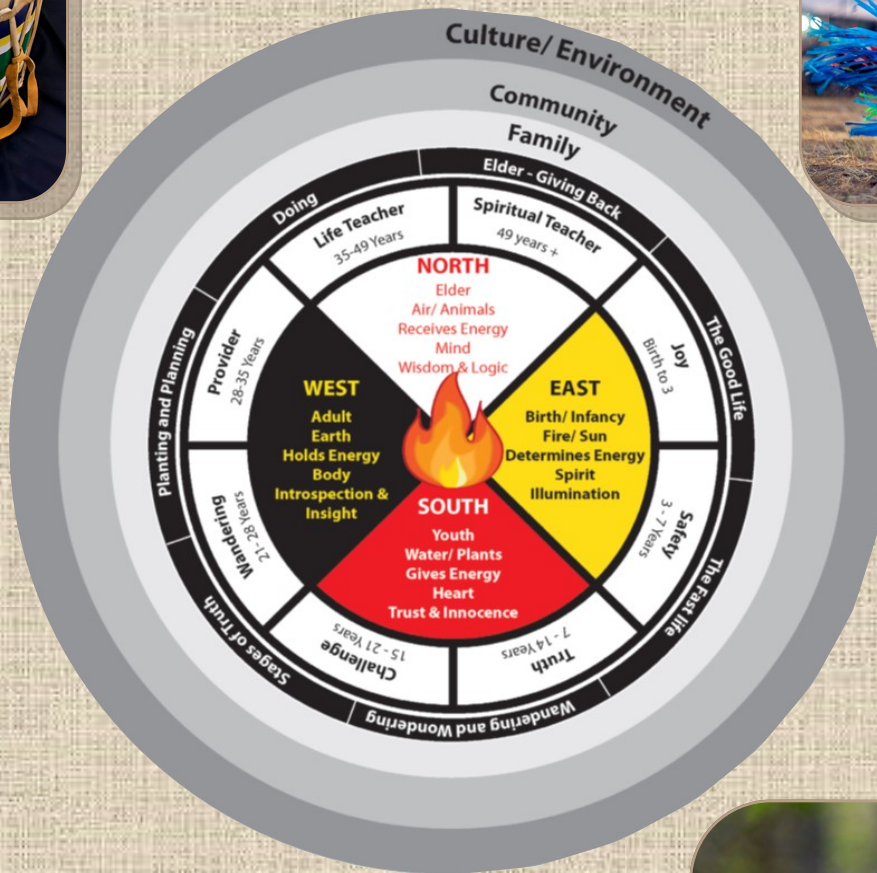
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10

A Bit About Being Indigenous

“There are three categories of Indigenous peoples in Canada: Inuit, Métis and First Nations. The Inuit primarily inhabit the northern regions of Canada. Their homeland, known as Inuit Nunangat, includes much of the land, water and ice contained in the Arctic region. Métis peoples are of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry, and live mostly in the Prairie Provinces and Ontario, but also in other parts of the country. First Nations peoples were the original inhabitants of the land that is now Canada, often occupying territories south of the Arctic.”

(Filice, Michelle; October 12, 2018; <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people>)



Key Messages

1 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures have long passed on knowledge from generation to generation through oral traditions, including storytelling. Storytelling is a traditional method used to teach about cultural beliefs, values, customs, rituals, history, practices, relationships, and ways of life. First Nations storytelling is a foundation for holistic learning, relationship building, and experiential learning.

2 “The Medicine Wheel, sometimes known as the Sacred Hoop or Sacred Circle, has been used by generations of various Native American tribes and First Nations in Canada for health and healing and as a tool for learning and teaching.” (Beaulieu, Kelly J.; The Seven Lessons of the Medicine Wheel <https://saymag.com/the-seven-lessons-of-the-medicine-wheel/>)

“As we journey through these seven stages we are also journeying through the life cycle, growing and learning along the way, understanding more about ourselves, and connecting more to our life’s purpose that was given by the Creator before birth.

The seven stages of life are often described as:

- The Good Life
- The Fast Life
- The Wandering and Wondering Life
- The Stages of Truth
- Planting and Planning
- Doing
- The Elder, Giving Back Life



(Nurturing the Seed p.33 © Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP), 2017, rev. 2019)

3 “Powwows are celebrations that showcase Indigenous music, dances, regalia, food and crafts. Commonly hosted by First Nations communities (either on reserve or in urban settings), powwows are often open to non-Indigenous and Métis and Inuit peoples alike. Contemporary powwows originated on the Great Plains during the late 19th century and, since the 1950s, have been growing in size, number and popularity. Powwows serve an important role in many Indigenous peoples’ lives as a forum to visit family and friends, and to celebrate their cultural heritage, while also serving as a site for cross-cultural sharing with other attendees and participants. Indeed, powwows provide the opportunity for visitors to learn about, and increase their awareness of, traditional and contemporary Indigenous life and culture.”

(Filice,Michelle; October 15, 2018; <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/powwows-editorial>)

4 “There are a number of ways in which children may participate in their culture”.....these are some ways:

- mechanisms of cultural structure such as beliefs, rituals, customs, traditions, and ceremonies which are also “value” based language and communication patterns
- family orientations
- healing beliefs and practices
- religion
- art, dance, and music
- diet and food
- recreation
- clothing – regalia, moss bag
- history
- social status
- social group interactions



(Nurturing the Seed 26 © Infant Mental Health Promotion (IMHP), 2017, rev 2019)



To visit an EarlyON Child and Family Centre near you,
please explore the following link:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-earlyon-child-and-family-centre>

