

Ready to Read

A whole world awaits children when they learn to read. They can travel to far-off lands, find out how to grow a garden or bake a cake, discover dinosaurs and planets, and learn about famous and not-so-famous people who lived long ago—just by reading a book. Success in adulthood also depends a lot on being able to read. Because reading is so important in life, parents and teachers need to provide the kind of environment for young children that encourages language development and reading readiness.

Tips for Parents

- Give babies and toddlers their own books with large pictures and bright colors to read so they become familiar with how books work (how to turn pages, what's right-side-up and front and back, etc.).
- Point out the parts of the book—the cover, the name of the book, the letters, and the words.
- Read to your child every day, and let her turn the pages and point out objects.
- Read books that have rhythm and repetition, like nursery rhymes.
- As you read, make the story come alive by creating voices for the different characters.
- Ask questions about the story and invite your child to tell the story.
- Sing songs to help children learn language.
- Provide child-safe writing tools, like big crayons, washable markers, and construction paper.
- Go to the local library and let your child choose a book he likes.
- Point out words on signs when you're out walking or driving.



Tips for Teachers

- Create space in the classroom for reading and writing, with age-appropriate materials like paper, pencils and crayons, and lots of different kinds of books.
- Label objects around the room and display simple written messages and instructions.
- Provide time for reading and writing every day, and encourage children to read and write to each other.
- Develop a library so children can take their favorite books home.
- Help children develop familiarity with books with what *Zero to Three* calls “early literacy behaviors”: physically handling books, looking at books and recognizing pictures, understanding the pictures and events in the story, and pretending to read or following printed words with their fingers.

R E S O U R C E S

Babies, Toddlers and Early Reading, Zero to Three. <http://bit.ly/2l7wgG7>

Early Literacy Development: A Focus on Preschool. Connecticut State Department of Education. <http://bit.ly/2kw5fM6>

Literacy Development in the Preschool Years, International Reading Association. <http://bit.ly/2kUor6J>

Learning is Everywhere. PA's Promise for Children. papromiseforchildren.com/learning-is-everywhere

Programs and families can contact the program leadership directly at PAIECMH@pakeys.org with questions or concerns.

