

Supporting Language & Literacy

5 Years: Why Literacy Matters

Every moment you've had with your child has helped them learn important language and pre-literacy skills. Strong literacy skills will help your child live the life they want and achieve their dreams. Don't stop now! You're still a very important part of them learning to read. Continue talking, reading, singing, and playing with them to build a strong foundation for all future reading.

TIPS & ACTIVITIES



Partner with your child's teacher. See how you can reinforce the skills your child is learning at school.

Help your child start to learn time. Sing songs or use words like "today" and "tomorrow."



Talk about and label your child's feelings, and your own. This helps them express themselves through words, and not unwanted behaviors.



Continue to use your home language, the one you feel most comfortable using, even if it's different from the one primarily spoken at school. For children who speak multiple languages, this gives them the opportunity to practice all their language skills.



Common Language Milestones

Keeps conversations going with more than 3 back-and-forth exchanges

Uses longer, more complex, and grammatically correct sentences

With help, describes how illustrations support the story in a book

Uses words for time correctly, like yesterday and tomorrow

Speech is easily understandable in conversation

Asks questions about feelings

Early Detection is Intervention

Your child is always learning.

As a caregiver, you have an amazing opportunity to guide them on a path to success! If you notice your child is having difficulties with a certain skill, isn't meeting multiple milestones, or if something just doesn't feel quite right, talk with your child's healthcare provider.



Tips to set you and your child up for success when speaking with their healthcare provider:

Keep a journal.

Write down things that you notice your child doing, or not doing, that cause reason for concern.

Use your resources.

Explore the websites below to find milestone checklists, a list of early warning signs, videos, and more.

Trust your instincts.

You know your child best and you are their best advocate. Don't be afraid to speak up.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Pathways: Communication](#)

[Harvard University: Center on the Developing Child](#)

[Cox Campus](#)

[The Basics](#)

[CDC Milestones](#)