

Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders



E: Preschool Years How Parents Can Help Children Learn to Read

Oral language is the foundation for reading. Listening and speaking are a child's first introduction to language. Talking and singing teach your child the sounds of language, making it easier for him or her to learn how to read.

Here are some things you can do to help your child build an appreciation for words and language:

- Tell family stories about yourself, your child's grandparents and other relatives.
- Talk to your child as much as possible about things you are doing and thinking.
- Ask your child lots of questions.
- Be patient! Give your child time to find the words he or she wants to use.
- Encourage your child to tell you what he or she thinks or feels.
- Ask your child to tell you about his or her day - about activities and games played.
- Sing songs, such as the alphabet song, and recite nursery rhymes, encouraging your child to join in.
- Play rhyming and riddle games.

Excerpt from *A Parent's Guide, Helping Your Child Learn to Read*, Government of Ontario, Early Reading Strategy.

Additional Tips for Children with Speech and Language Disorders

- Make sure you have the child's attention. Get down to the child's level and make sure he/she can see your face.
- Reduce any background noises by switching off the radio and TV.
- Use simple sentences and pronounce words carefully.
- Describe activities and name objects as you play together.
- Expand your child's answer to questions.
- Talk about feelings and provide words to describe different feelings.
- Provide lots of opportunities to practise words and use simple sentences

See more parent activities to help children develop pre-literacy skills on this website.

- **Communicating for Fun Calendars, and**
- **Promoting Literacy at Home for Early Learners**