

10 Tips for Families of Young Children

1. Read aloud to your child every day

- Read to babies even before they can talk
- Let your child see and touch the book
- Play with voices and the sounds of words

2. Create a print rich-home environment

- Have a wide variety of books available to children
- Encourage children to look at books on their own
- Set aside a family reading area and a family reading time

3. Use grocery shopping to encourage reading and writing

- Have children help you search for specific brands
- Use the aisle markers with your child to find items
- Match coupons to products
- Have children write out grocery lists

4. Cook with your child to develop literacy

- Show your child how to read a recipe
- Read the labels on ingredients together
- Make a family cookbook of favorite recipes
- Develop oral literacy by talking about family recipes and cooking tips

5. Point out environmental print to children.

- Note signage during nature walks and other outings
- Discuss logos
- Ask children to point out print outside of the home environment

6. Tell stories together

- Talk together about your family history
- Look at old vacation photos and discuss your memories of the trip
- Record your storytelling

7. Sing and rhyme with your child

- Choose songs with rhymes and word play
- Play rhyming games with your child such as what other words sound like "honey"?
- Challenge your child to sing or say rhymes as fast as they can and don't forget to laugh if the results are silly

8. Write with your child

- Provide lots of writing materials (chalk, markers, crayons, and pencils)
- Encourage your child to draw and write on their own
- Encourage your child to write thank you notes to grandparents, make to-do lists, etc.

9. Tie literacy to art

- Visit an art museum together and use storytelling to explain what is happening in the artwork. Allow your child to interpret the artwork however he/she views it
- Have children create their own drawings, painting, sculptures, and even instillation pieces made from recyclables in your living room
- Explain art with sentence strips on which children dictate to you what their artwork is about (consider making a recording in which the children can tell a story about their artwork)

10. Visit the library (and/or bookstore) often

- Make trips as often as you can
- Encourage your child to get his or her own library card
- Take advantage of library programs, such as read alouds and family book clubs

Source: Reading Is Fundamental

