

Ways to Build Early Literacy

- **Talking with Children**
A strong foundation in spoken language helps children read and write. Share conversation about what s/he likes to eat or play with or her favorite pet.
- **Reading to Children**
Reading to children is one of the best ways to build reading skills. Be sure to invite your student to join in with you when s/he is ready.
- **Reading with Children**
You and your child read the book at the same time. Look at the text together while you point to the words being read. Soon your student will be reading on his/her own.
- **Helping Children Read Independently**
Practice makes perfect – this also holds true for reading. You contribute in a big way by listening and helping students as they read aloud to you.
- **Writing for Children**
We often learn by watching someone do what we want to learn. Many of us master writing by watching a writer at work. Try to “think out loud” as you write to make the process accessible.
- **Writing with Children**
This gives your students the chance to do some of the writing while you fill in the rest. You can do the hard parts and your student can do the easier parts in writing. Be sure you read what you have written, together or individually.
- **Helping Children Write Independently**
Help your student pick up a few new skills each time you write together (i.e. capitalization, spelling of common words, and where to put a period in a sentence).
- **Understanding Phonics, Letters, and Words**
Help students understand how sounds and letters relate to each other. Help them learn that words are made up of sounds (beginning, middle, and end). Also help them distinguish between letters, words, and sentences.
- **Making Books**
The books your student will make need not be complicated – perhaps only one line of print per page – but your students will become authors of books they can read again and again.
- **Connecting Your Work with Children’s Homes**
Your closing activity is a great way to show parents what you are working on together. As the year proceeds, you can send home other reading and writing material.