

TALKING IS
TEACHING.



When you talk, read, and sing with your child, you're strengthening your bond with her and helping her learn. Research shows that talking, reading, and singing with your child every day from birth builds her brain as well as important language, math, reading and social-emotional skills.

You probably naturally talk to your child about the things you do and see each day. We encourage you to keep doing it, and do it more—in whatever language you feel comfortable speaking at home. The more conversations, songs, and stories you share during your everyday moments together, the more you are preparing your child to succeed—in school and in life!

TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

TALK

- Tune in and listen to your child. What are they noticing, pointing to, or asking questions about? Use these moments to spark fun conversations with your child. For example, "I see the shiny yellow bus, too. Who do you think is on the bus?"
- Share back-and-forth conversations. When talking together, try to take turns listening and speaking. When you keep the conversation going for as long as possible, you're helping your child develop language skills and also showing her that her words are important to you.
- Use new and interesting words. Young children can learn new and big words if you clearly show and explain what they mean. For example, when you see something very big, you might say, "That is an enormous building!" or "I spy a gigantic truck!"
- Talk together in your home language. Using your home language provides great benefits to your child's brain development. It's also a wonderful way for you to pass on your family's rich heritage. The easiest, most important way to do this is by speaking together in your home language every day. Enjoy sharing fun stories, poems, rhymes, and songs from your own childhood.



USE THE WORD
"ENORMOUS"
INSTEAD OF "BIG!"

Read

- Cuddle up and read together every day. It's never too early to inspire a love of reading, so try to make reading a part of your daily routine like nap time or bedtime. Your child loves the feeling of being close to you and sharing a story together. If you don't feel comfortable reading, feel free to make up your own story about the pictures you see in the book or about your day together.
- Read anywhere you are. Pack a book in your bag so you can read it together wherever you are like the bus, store or park. You can even point to and read words that are all around you—on street signs, in stores, and around the neighborhood.
- Make book reading fun and exciting. Try to ask "Who? What? When? Where? Why?" questions along the way to encourage your child to talk about what's happening in the story. You can also use different voices and gestures to act out the characters or story.
- Allow children to read the same books over and over. It's natural for children to want to keep reading the same books. Sometimes they have a favorite book, sometimes it is comforting and familiar for them to hear over and over, and sometimes the story relates to an experience they're having. Each time, try to point out new words, ideas, or pictures and talk about them together.

TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS (CONTINUED)

SING

- Choose fun songs to sing together. Try to choose songs you and your child can enjoy singing together. Songs with rhymes and repeating words can help make it easier for children to remember the lyrics. Encourage your preschoolers to fill in the last word to a song. For example, “Old MacDonald had a... FARM!”
- Make up fun songs throughout the day. Use your daily moments like washing clothes, cooking, or cleaning to come up with fun words to sing out loud together. You can replace words to familiar songs like “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” with phrases to describe the things you’re doing together.
- Sing songs that connect to your culture or background. Singing songs from your own childhood or culture can help your child learn new words while keeping them connected to your family’s heritage. You can also have fun adding traditional dances while you sing together.
- Use hand and body movements. Creating fun movements to go along with the lyrics can help children get excited about a song while learning new words and concepts. You can even encourage your preschooler to make up some silly moves!



You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more—on our website,

TALKINGISTEACHING.ORG

