



Literacy Learning Starts at Birth

- 1. Read to me!** Babies love to be held and cuddled. When you read to your baby using a comforting, soothing or playful voice, he will feel secure. Over time he will associate reading with a feeling of pleasure. Follow your baby's lead, making sure he is comfortable and engaged. A few minutes at a time are usually enough for a young baby's attention span. And remember..... you don't have to read every word. Just talk about the pictures.
- 2. Talk to me!** Babies love to listen to your voice and learn language in every day routines. Talk about your family routines such as dressing, mealtimes, and bedtimes, and repeat your words often. Label common objects, describe actions, and use feeling words. Pay attention to your baby's actions, gestures and sounds. Respond to these by imitating and interpreting what they might mean.
- 3. Tell me a story!** Babies love to hear oral stories in your own language, from your own traditions. Talk about what you are doing and then "tell stories" about what you did. If you take photos of your activities, show them as you retell stories about your experiences. Speak in the language that feels most natural and comfortable for you.
- 4. Sing to me!** Babies love repetition, rhyme and rhythm that come from nursery rhymes, finger plays and songs. Bounce your baby on your lap as you sing or tell rhymes. You can make up your own songs and include baby's name. Some popular songs include "Row Row Row your Boat" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." It can be fun to play with words, making silly sounds such as "Skinnamarink" and "Boo-boo-bi-do".
- 5. Let me explore!** Babies love all kinds of books, especially those with bright, bold pictures of babies, animals and everyday activities. Babies like to explore how things feel, so they enjoy books that have soft textured pages, doors that open or parts that move. Sometimes they will even explore books by chewing on them! It helps to have books at baby's eye level, such as baskets on the floor, low shelves, in the bath area and on the sofa.