

# Talking



Every **CHILD**  
Ready to **READ**  
@ your library\*

Children start to learn language by hearing people talk. This is oral language! When you talk with your baby, your baby is hearing the sounds of the languages you speak, learning what words mean as you point to and label things. Babies will start to babble and their babble uses the sounds they have heard. As children get older they follow directions, repeat your words, respond to what you say with words, phrases, and then whole sentences. Listening to children while they speak is as important as talking to them. Young children need more time than adults do to figure out what to say and how to say it. Having your children talk, tell and retell stories, and tell you what they know all helps them to later understand what they read.

When you add new words and information to conversations with your children, you are developing their vocabulary and background knowledge. When you talk with them about signs and logos, you are developing their print awareness. When you talk with them about shapes and observe what is alike and different, or point out letters, you are developing their letter knowledge.

As you talk with children, you have the opportunity to support their pre-reading skills in little ways that add up to make a difference by the time children enter school. Using the five practices (Talking, Singing, Reading, Writing and Playing) to support the early literacy skills in enjoyable ways is the best way to help children enter school ready to learn to read.

## Discover some things to talk about at [DaybyDayVa.org](http://DaybyDayVa.org).

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