



A project of
From the Start:
A Birth to Five Literacy Coalition

PLAY-GROW-READ! Around the House

Early Literacy Activities
for Babies, Toddlers,
and Preschoolers.



Early Literacy: Why It Matters

Research shows that development of language begins at birth. Sharing activities with your child will help them develop the pre-reading skills needed so they will enter school ready to succeed.

Narrative Skills (fun with stories)

Tell stories together, share books, and encourage pretend play.

Letter Knowledge (fun with letters)

Help your child identify the first letter in his/her name and recognize that letters are different from each other. Show them letters in books, on street signs, and on package labels.

Print Awareness (fun with reading)

Help your child discover how to hold a book and turn the pages. Show your child that words are everywhere, and that they have meaning.

Vocabulary (fun with words)

Teach your child the specific names of things, like vegetables at the grocery store.

Print Motivation (fun with books)

Find books that speak to your child's interests and share them often.

Phonological Awareness (fun with sounds)

Sing songs, play games and share rhymes to help your child play with sounds in words.



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Early Literacy Activities for Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

When your baby was born, the doors of learning opened wide! From birth, children learn best through their emotions and senses, and when a loving bond is created.

You can make a difference by talking to your baby while diapering, or sharing a bedtime story with your child. Take every opportunity inside and outside your home to add to the special moments of childhood, while giving your child important literacy experiences.

These simple, yet powerful activities require no special materials or preparation. Talking, singing, reciting rhymes, playing games, sharing books, and listening to music are fun and meaningful ways to spend time with your child.

For more information about early literacy, visit the Public Library Association website, "Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library" at www.pla.org





IN THE FAMILY SPACE: TODDLER

Play With Your Toddler

- Play “I Spy” with familiar objects in the room.
- Tip toe, march, leap, hop, take or giant steps around the room.
- Touch objects around the room and say the names. For example, “Liam is touching the table,” “Liam is touching the soft pillow.”
- Point out the nose, eyes, or ears on your child, and try it with a favorite doll or stuffed animal.
- Wind up a musical toy and hide it. “Where’s the music? Let’s go find it!”

Rhyme and Play

Do the following actions with your child:

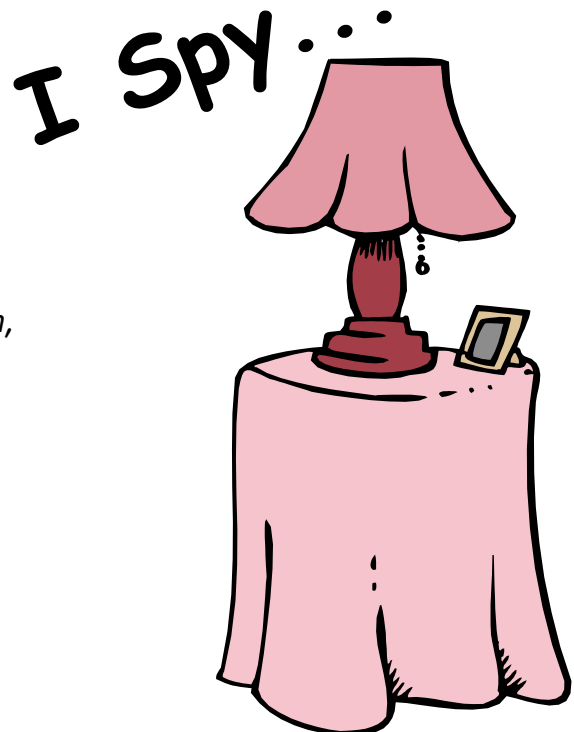
*Roll your hands so slowly,
As slowly as can be.
Roll your hands so slowly,
And fold your arms like me.
Roll your arms so quickly,
As quickly as can be.
Roll your hands so quickly,
And fold your arms like me!*

Books to Share

- *I Spy Little Animals*, by Jean Marzollo
- *Picture This*, by Alison Jay
- *The Alphabet Room*, by Sara Pinto
- *Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children*, by Sandra L. Pinkney

Fun with Music

- *The Elephant Show*, by Sharon, Lois & Bram
- *The Singable Song Collection*, by Raffi
- *It’s Toddler Time*, by Carol Totsky Hammett





IN THE KITCHEN: TODDLER

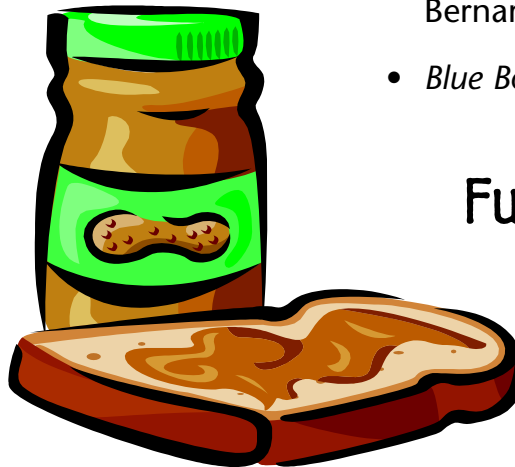
Play With Your Toddler

- Let your toddler pour a cup of dry cereal from one plastic cup to another. Use the cereal for counting and sorting.
- Put a surprise treat for your child to discover in a cupboard or drawer.
- Give your child a plate of cooked, cooled rice to play with.
- Make tapping rhythms with wooden or plastic spoons. Tap fast, slow, loud, and soft.
- Let your child smell various foods like an orange, a cookie, or cheese, and talk about the differences.
- Use pudding on a cookie sheet or table for finger painting.
- Look for letters, numbers, and words on cereal boxes and food labels.
- When eating, talk about the flavors of sweet, sour, salty, and spicy.

Rhyme and Play

Wash the dishes,
Wipe the dishes,
Ring the bell for tea.
(pretend to ring bell)
Three good wishes,
Three good kisses,
I will give to thee.

(clap hands as verse
is recited, then kiss
child three times)



Books to Share

- *Lunch*, by Denise Fleming
- *Peanut Butter and Jelly*, by Nadine Bernard Westcott
- *Blue Bowl Down*, by C.M. Miller

Fun with Music

- *Yummy Yummy*,
by The Wiggles



IN THE BEDROOM: TODDLER

Play with Your Toddler

- Before bed, talk about the day.
- Let your child help pick out something to wear; talk about the colors of the clothing.
- Whispering is fun. Practice talking softly to each other.
- Name objects in your child's room, and count them.
- Before bed each night, share a book with your toddler.

Rhyme and Play

Sit on the floor—barefoot with your toddler—facing you and recite this poem:

Wiggle your toes, one, two, three.

Wiggle your toes just like me.

Now tell the wiggles to go away.

(shake your index finger)

And sit still for the rest of the day.

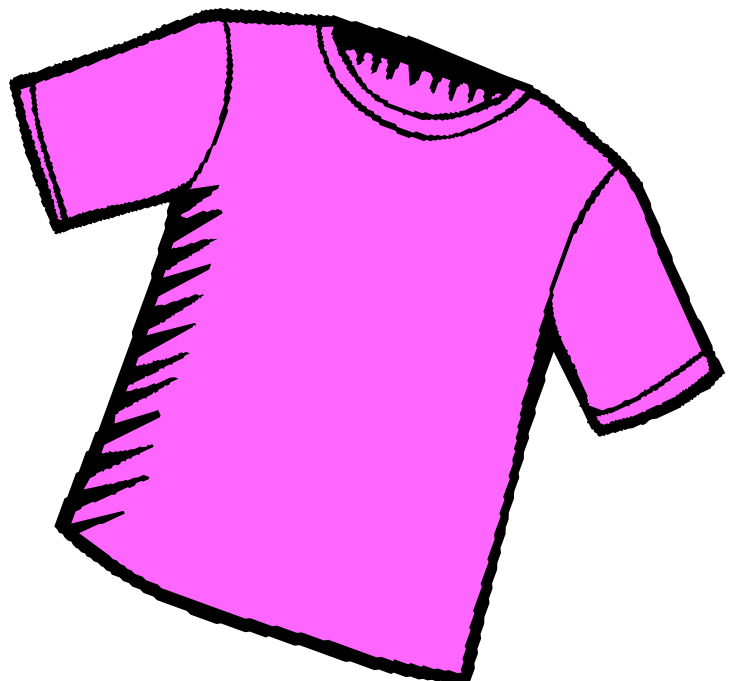
(You can repeat the poem by saying different parts of the body, such as fingers, elbows, nose, or tongue.)

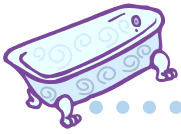
Books to Share

- *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, by Eileen Christelow
- *Kiss Goodnight*, by Amy Hest
- *Honey Baby Sugar Child*, by Alice Fay Duncan
- *Cuddle Time*, by Libby Gleeson

Fun with Music

- *Say Hello to the Morning*, by Kathy Reid-Nairman
- *Carousel Dreams*, by Susan Moss

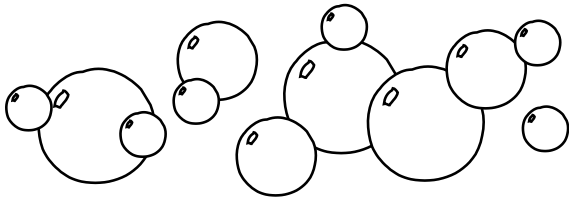




IN THE BATHROOM: TODDLER

Play with Your Toddler

- Make silly faces in the mirror with your child.
- Fill the bathtub with measuring cups, a spatula, plastic spoons, or other safe kitchen utensils for filling, pouring, and mixing.
- While your child is in the bathtub, blow bubbles to clap and pop.



- While bathing your child, say and act out this poem:

Here comes the rain,
Splash, splash, splash.
(Splash the tub water)

Here comes the rain,
Drip, drip, drip.
(Drip little drops of water on your toddler)

Here comes the rain,
Pitter, patter
(Flick your fingers in the water)

Get my sweetie clean all over.
(Wash your toddler with a washcloth)

Rhyme and Play

Use a plastic doll in the tub, and repeat the rhyme:

Swim, swim little doll
All around the tub.

Splishy, splashy, splashy, splashy,
Glub, glub, glub!

Sing while bathing your child, to the tune of "London Bridge":

Head and shoulders,
knees and toes, knees and toes.
Head and shoulders, knees and toes.
Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
head and shoulders, knees and toes.

Books to Share

- *King Bidgood's in the Bathtub*, by Audrey Wood
- *Bath Time*, by Eileen Spinelli
- *No More Water in the Tub*, by Ted Arnold
- *Bernard's Bath*, by Joan Elizabeth Goodman

Fun with Music

- *Bathtime Magic*, by Joanie Bartels



IN THE CAR: TODDLER

Fun with Your Toddler

- When you hear sounds like a car horn, copy them and have your child make the sound.
- Point to signs and tell your child what they say. For example, “Look, that red sign says, ‘STOP!’”
- While driving, look out the window and talk about what you see.
- Show your child the traffic lights, and talk about what the colors mean.
- Talk with your child about the weather.

- When crossing streets, talk about safety. Tell your child about looking right, looking left, and making sure the road is clear.

Rhyme and Play

Old McDonald had a car, EIEIO.
And on his car he had a horn, EIEIO.
With a beep, beep, here,
and a beep, beep, there,
here a beep, there a beep,
everywhere a beep, beep!

Books to Share

- *Where is Coco Going?*, by Sloane Taner
- *I Love Trucks!*, by Philemon Sturgis
- *Beep! Beep!*, by Anne Miranda
- *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom*, by Kirsten Hall

Fun with Music

- *Kids Travilin' Songs*, by Christopher Pennington
- *We Sing Children's Songs and Fingerplays*, by Pamela Conn Beall





OUTSIDE: TODDLER

Play with Your Toddler

- When out taking a walk, show your child how to listen to and copy sounds around you.
- Show your child his shadow, and how fun it can be to play with.
- Help your child write letters and draw pictures with sidewalk chalk
- Make mud pies with your child, or play in the sand.
- Go on a bug hunt, and talk about insects. Worms and caterpillars are wiggly, spiders spin webs, bees make honey — but can sting.

Rhyme and Play

Rain, rain, go away,
Come again another day.
Little (child's name) wants to play.

Using your hands, say this rhyme together:

Five little robins up in a tree.

Father

(touch child's thumb)

Mother

(touch child's index finger)

And babies three.

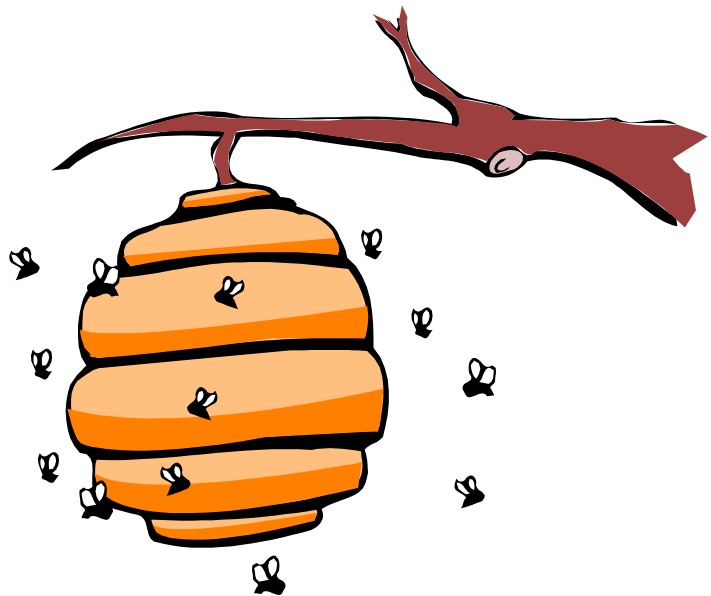
(touch other three fingers)

Books to Share

- *Peek! A Thai and Seek*, by Minfong Ho
- *Little Quack*, by Lauren Thompson
- *Papa Please Get The Moon For Me*, by Eric Carle
- *Barnyard Song*, by Rhonda Growler Green

Fun with Music

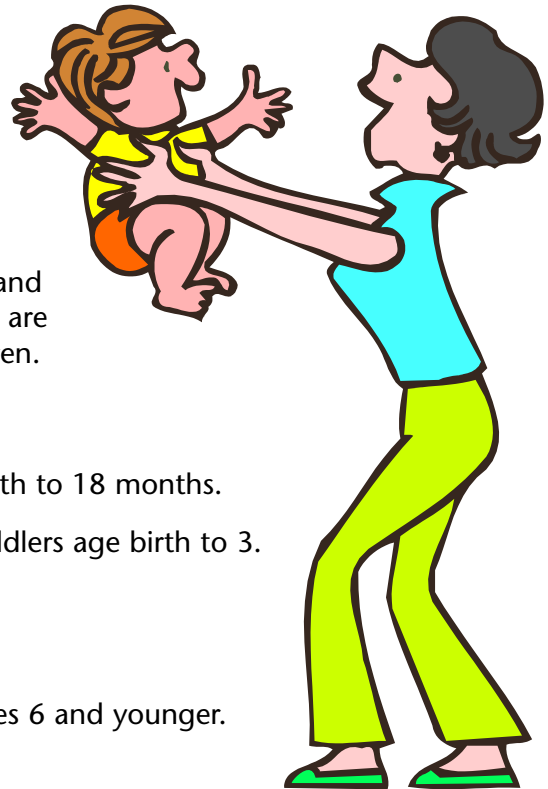
- *So Big*, by Hap Palmer
- *Wiggly Safari*, by The Wiggles
- *Goin' to the Zoo*, by Tom Paxton



Early Literacy Library Programs

Storytimes are a good way to introduce children to the library. At storytimes, librarians and other specially trained staff present stories, songs, games and seasonal crafts. Librarians can also answer questions about books, library programs and reading in general.

Check the KDL website, www.kdl.org, for program dates and times and registration information. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to stay and participate along with their children. All programs are free.



Babytime: For parents/caregivers and babies, birth to 18 months.

Laptime: For parents/caregivers and babies/toddlers age birth to 3.

Storytime: For preschoolers ages 3 to 6.

Family Storytime: For all children, ages 6 and younger.

Pajama Storytime: Evening programs, for all children ages 6 and younger.



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For further information about PLAY-GROW-READ! contact:

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