

# Monthly Message:

*It's never too early to read to your children!*

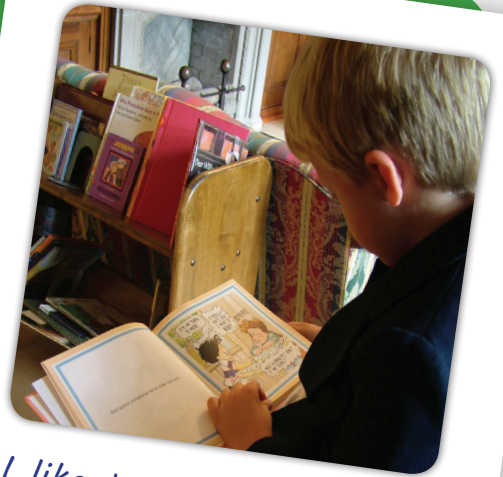
Young children need nutritious food, stimulating toys and lots of hugs and kisses. But beginning at birth, they also need to be talked, sung and read to.

New research from Stanford psychologists shows that by talking and reading to your child, parents can help their children learn language more quickly, which speeds up vocabulary growth.

We have known the importance of reading to your child for a long time, but this new evidence is showing that language and literacy really begins at birth. Gaps can emerge as early as 18 months between children who are read and talked to and those who have those interactions less often.

Parents, caregivers and teachers have the most influence on children's language and literacy development. Don't wait until preschool or kindergarten to start sharing books with your child. Sharing books with your children can even help them get ready to listen and learn in school.

An easy place to begin a new reading routine is bedtime. Set aside time before bed with the TV off and start with one of your childhood favorites or [visitscholastic.com](http://visitscholastic.com) for a list of book ideas for young children.



*I like to read out loud!*



- 6- 11 Month Olds Can:
- Hold onto a book and pat the pictures.
  - Taste a book.
  - Copy some of the sounds you say and the looks on your face.
  - Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time.

What Parents Can Do:

- Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing.
- Name and point to the pictures your baby shows interest in.
- Help your baby turn pages.
- Act out pictures using your face, hands and voice.

12- 17 Month Olds Can:

- Look at favorite pictures and make their own sounds for some of them.
- Point to 1 or 2 animals and make that animal's sound.
- Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time.
- Laugh and jabber while enjoying a favorite book with you.

What Parents Can Do:

- Name and say a few words about the pictures your child is pointing to
- Imitate the sound or words your child says while looking at a picture
- Name and demonstrate actions in a book

Four Year Olds Can:

- Tell you which books they want to share with you.
- Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done.
- Ask you questions about books you are enjoying together.
- Point out if you skip a word or page in a favorite book.
- Tell you the story in a favorite book in their own words.
- Enjoy a trip to your local public library for story Time or to borrow some books.

What Parents Can Do:

- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story.
- Respond with enthusiasm to your child's questions and comments.
- Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way.
- Point out colors, shapes, numbers and letters in their books.

Two and Three Year Olds Can:

- Name the books they want to share.
- Enjoy sharing the same book over and over again.
- Repeat some of the words and phrases you say or read.
- Ask you questions, like: "what's that?"
- Pretend to read a favorite book aloud.

What Parents Can Do:

- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story.
- Start a conversation by repeating an important word or phrase.
- Respond with enthusiasm to your child!

18-23 Month Olds Can:

- Choose a book to share and tell you if they want to read another book.
- Point to a favorite picture and say a word or two about it.
- Look at animals and make their sounds.
- Finish some sentences from books they know very well.

What Parents Can Do:

- Help your child pronounce words better.
- Help your child understand by speaking in slow, short sentences.
- Use book sharing as a way to calm and comfort your child.