

Building Language Skills from Birth

Research shows that building a **language-rich environment** from birth makes a big difference in a child's ability to **speak, read, and write**.

Follow these **tips** to help your child develop language skills early in life.



Talking & Language

Look at your child and **talk** to, with, and around her or him often during everyday activities—like when folding laundry or waiting in line—starting from birth.

Speak in your native language as often as possible.

Pause to give your child the chance to “speak” in sounds, grunts, coos, and eventually words and phrases. This helps build conversation skills.

Encourage family members, friends, and others who might be around your child to talk with each other and with your child.

Reading & Literacy

Read books to your child daily, starting at birth. Find books for children of all ages at your local library—older ones can even pick their own.

Point to printed text and pictures while reading. Encourage the child to turn the book's pages, and let him or her touch the words and pictures on the pages, too.

Talk about what happened in the story, and ask what might happen next.

Ask open-ended questions that start with who, what, when, why, or how, and give your child a chance to answer using sounds and words.

For more information, visit <http://i.usa.gov/IQqK151>.



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