

NCFL In the News...

Story featured in 75 publications • Readership: 1,635,341

LIVING

Turning Children Into Good Readers

(StatePoint) Nearly every child can become a successful reader, but parents need to focus on this skill early on, from the time their children are babies. So says new research from the National Early Literacy Panel.

As the organization that directed the research, the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) is providing free tips and activities for parents to practice with their kids.

The National Early Literacy Panel analyzed more than 3000 studies on early childhood literacy to determine which critical skills lead to future academic success.

“For the first time ever we’ve been able to identify early literacy skills that lead to later reading success,” said Sharon Darling, president and founder of the NCFL. “Now parents can use these skills to help hone their child’s reading ability.”

These key skills include alphabet knowledge; awareness of the individual sounds of words; rapid naming of letters, numbers, objects and colors; the ability to write, including a child writing his or her name; and oral language.

The experts at the NCFL have translated these findings into everyday activities that parents can perform with young children:

- **Shower Your Baby With Words.** Even though he may not understand, he stores the sounds. Soon he’ll be able to put sounds and words together and speak. Talk about what you and your child are doing throughout the day. For example, describe activities like changing your child’s diaper, feeding your child, or giving her a bath.

- **Words + Words = More Words!** As your baby begins to speak, encourage him by adding extra words. For example, if your child points to his toy and says, “Truck,” add some words. “Yes, that’s your big, red truck!”

- **What Is This?** Make a picture game using photos of things your child sees at home. Find pictures in magazines -- chairs, teddy bears, foods, etc. Hand your child a picture and ask him if he knows what it is. When he says the word, have him find the object and lead you to it. This increases your child’s vocabulary and gives him practice using symbols.

- **Reading and Sharing.** Preschoolers aged three-to-five are ready to be your reading partner. Read books aloud, asking questions about what is happening in the



Parents need to focus on children’s reading from an early age.

story and the pictures.

- **Rhyme Time.** Read rhyming stories with pre-schoolers and recite nursery rhymes. Pause at the end of lines and let your child fill in the rhyming word. This encourages children to listen carefully to the different sounds.

- **My Name Is Special!** Children are fascinated by the letters in their names. Playing word games with these letters can get them learning about language. Write the letters on paper, cut them apart and put them in an envelope. Let your child pull out the letters and put them in order. Look for things in your home that start with that letter or the first letter of her name.

- **My ABCs.** Look for ABC books that match your child’s interests -- animals, foods, children’s names, machines. You can also help your child make her own alphabet book. You could start by looking for one picture for each letter in her name.

- **Book Time.** Point out the title and the illustration on the cover. Read the title and author’s name out loud. Let your child turn the pages. Follow along with the text, running your finger under words. Learning how books work are important steps toward learning to read.

For more tips and activities, visit www.famlit.org/cultivatingreaders.