

## Learning to Read

The process of learning to read starts very early with your child's first language experiences. When you play games like "Pat-a-Cake" with your child, you're helping him hear the rhythm and sounds of speech. This will lead to understanding syllables and letter sounds.

### Your child's reading development

Your child will go through stages of development while learning to read. Watch for the following skills to develop in your child.

- Hold a book upright and turn pages from front to back.
- Relate a picture in a book to a real object.
- Attend to a story (may even be actively playing).
- Retell a familiar book from memory.
- Pay attention to meaningful print, such as his name.
- Understand that print carries a message.
- Identify labels and signs in his community.
- Chime in on key words or phrases when listening to familiar stories.
- Participate successfully in rhyming games or songs.
- Recognize and label the letters in his own name.
- Use pictures to "read" books that are unfamiliar to him.
- Know that words are composed of letters.

- Notice differences and similarities in words.
- Identify the beginning sounds of some meaningful words.
- "Read" English print from left to right and top to bottom.

### Supporting your child's reading development

Unlike talking, reading doesn't develop naturally. Your child needs regular experiences with written and spoken language. Here are some ways you can help him enter school ready to read.

- Help him learn how books work. Read to your child often and point out how you read—front to back, left to right, top to bottom.
- Build your child's vocabulary. Have meaningful conversations that allow your child to recall events and describe what they see.
- Model reading for purpose and pleasure. Read out loud the recipe while preparing dinner or directions to a new game.
- Play rhyming games or sing a favorite song a new way (Binkle, Binkle, little star.)
- As he gets older, have your child find a recurring word or letter through out his favorite book. ("B" or "Bears" in *The Three Bears*)

#### Parents,

This information is provided to you today on behalf of a special visiting program your care provider is taking part in. If you would like to receive similar visits and learn more about how your child grows and develops, please contact your local Parents as Teachers program, call 1-866-PAT4YOU to find a program in your area, or visit our website at [www.patnc.org](http://www.patnc.org)

