

More than ABC's

Read, Sing, Talk and Play ... A family affair

Reading and writing is all around us—when you drive your car (reading the signs); when you go to the grocery store (making a shopping list); when you go to the doctor (reading the instruction on how to take the medicine). It is important to let your child see how you make reading and writing part of your everyday activities.

Here are some fun things to do that will help your child learn early reading and writing skills:

- At meal time, show your child the box or container of food and point out the letter or words on it. Cut out the logos and make a book of things your child likes to eat.
- Give everything a name. Your child's vocabulary will build as you point to names of things. Talk about pictures, ideas and words, listen to their thoughts and ideas.
- Read books over and over again. Children will understand and remember the story and be able to tell it or pretend to read it to you.
- Draw pictures or cut pictures out of magazines and talk about them. Let them use crayons, markers or pencils to have fun with drawing and scribbling. Write messages or notes, put them into special places for your child to find and read them.
- Sing songs and say nursery rhymes. Play games such as bingo (use letters instead of numbers); make signs for toy garages or stores to visit; make a menu for a picnic or a pretend restaurant.
- Visit the library and borrow a variety of books.

Remember, you are your child's first teacher. The enjoyment of books and reading is an important part of learning to read and write. Have fun and spend time everyday reading with your child.