



# PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM

A PROVEN BEGINNING FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS SINCE 1965

These tips can help enhance the learning opportunities through reading.

- Hold your child in your arms or sit close while reading. Your child will benefit from associating reading with feeling close and secure and loved by you. This is the beginning of your child developing a love of reading that will last a lifetime.
- Choose books that have interesting illustrations for you and your child to explore together. Talk about what you see. Tell the story by just using the illustrations.
- For very young children, ask labeling questions based on the illustrations.
- For children ages birth-2, choose interactive books, such as lift-the-flap books or books that feature textures. Infants enjoy looking at photos of baby faces and will eventually catch on to turning the pages, usually by the age of 12 months. Don't be afraid to make silly sounds (such as animal sounds) – your child needs to hear and imitate a variety of sounds, as an early literacy skill that will eventually lead to your child recognizing phonemes, which are the units of sound that make up words.
- Choose some books with rhymes and repetition. Hearing rhyming sounds will help your child learn the letter sounds. Repetition will allow your child to predict the ends of sentences and tell the story her/himself.
- For somewhat older children (ages 3-5), start asking questions that will open up a conversation with your child. Ask who, what, where, and why questions.
- Ask your child to predict what will happen next in a story. Ask your child to remember what happened previously in the story.
- Once your child gets familiar with a book, read the beginning of a sentence, and see if your child can complete the sentence on his/her own.
- Once your child gets familiar with a book, see if your child can tell you the story, based on the illustrations. Your child does not have to know how to read in order to tell you the story.
- Choose some books with rhymes and repetition. Hearing rhyming sounds will help your child learn the letter sounds. Repetition will allow your child to predict the ends of sentences and tell the story her/himself.
- Children love to hear the same story again and again. This will help your child to understand sentence and story structure. After a while, your child will be able to tell the story her/himself.
- It is good for children to hear the same story told in different ways. This will help your child understand how to write a story him/herself, when he/she enters school.
- Use the illustrations to point out colors, shapes, and to show your child how to count.
- Show your child how to hold a book, turn the pages, and that sentences are read from left to right.
- Children have varying attention spans. Don't "force" your child to sit still and read a book. Let your child explore the book on her/his own first. Over time, your child's attention span will increase.
- It is most important that you talk to your child, so even if your child has difficulty sitting still with a book, keep the conversation going – use oral storytelling, play games, use everyday activities to increase conversation. Although you might not be reading, this sort of conversation will lead to your child having a love of words and stories.