

Talk, Read, and Sing:

Building Your Preschooler's Love of Language



Your child has been learning language since the day they were born. Every conversation, story, and song has helped. The preschool years are a wonderful time to build on all of that. And you can make it fun.

When you read together

Reading together builds language skills. It supports your connection with your child. Let them look at the pictures as long as they want. Ask them what they see. Guess what might happen next. Using silly voices for characters can make it even more fun.

Follow the words with your finger as you read. This helps children learn that we read from left to right. Point out letters and the sounds they make. "Look, a B. B is for bear. Buh buh bear." This helps children connect letters and sounds in a natural, playful way.

A library card is a wonderful gift at this age. Librarians are great at finding books that are just right.

When you talk together

Everyday moments are some of the best times for building language. You can talk on the bus, make a meal together, or walk to the park. Your conversations give your child new words and ideas. Research shows that everyday conversations help children build vocabulary faster than almost anything else.

Ask questions that invite more than a yes-or-no answer. This gives children a chance to think and share their own ideas. "Where do you think those ants are going?" opens up a whole conversation.

When your child begins to speak in short sentences, you can help their sentences grow naturally. If they say "Mommy go?" you can say "Yes, Mommy is going to work now." This shows them how sentences work without making it feel like a lesson.



When you are out and about

Words are everywhere. You can point out signs on buildings, labels on food, and words on the bus. This shows children that reading is part of real life. Telling stories about things that really happened or making up stories together helps children understand how stories work.

When you sing together

Singing is one of the most powerful language tools there is. Songs and rhymes help children notice the individual sounds in words. This is an important early reading skill. Silly songs, lullabies, and nursery rhymes are great ways to learn the sounds of language. Singing the same songs over and over helps children learn new words and feel the rhythm of language in a way that sticks.

At home

Keeping books, crayons, and magazines within easy reach at home invites children to explore words on their own every day.

Have more questions? Talk to your child's healthcare provider or one of the professionals supporting your family.

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