MILESTONES OF EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

NEWBORN TO 6 MONTHS

TALK, SING, READ, PLAY Right from birth, babies are listening, looking, and learning. So find, and enjoy, those everyday moments when you can talk, sing, read, and play together with your baby.

TALK, SING, READ, PLAY

Motor Development

What your child is doing

- holds head steady
- sits in lap without support
- grasps book, puts in mouth
- drops, throws book

Communication and Cognition

What your child is saying and learning

- smiles, babbles, coos
- likes and wants your voice
- likes pictures of baby faces
- begins to say "ma", "ba", "da"
- responds to own name
- pats picture to show interest

Anticipatory Guidance

What parents can do

- talk back and forth with your baby; make eye contact
- cuddle, talk, sing, read, play
- point at and name things: nose, ball, baby, dog...
- follow baby's cues for "more" or "stop"
- play games such as "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake"

What to Read

- board and cloth books; books with baby faces; nursery rhymes

6 TO 12 MONTHS

- holds head steady
- sits in lap without support
- grasps book, puts in mouth
- drops, throws book

12 TO 24 MONTHS

- holds and walks with book
- no longer puts book in mouth
- right away
- turns board book pages

- says single words, then
- 2- to 4-word phrases
- gives book to adult to read
- points at pictures
- turns book right-side up
- names pictures, follows
- simple stories

- smile and answer when your
- child speaks or points
- let your child help turn the
- pages; keep naming things
- use books in family routines:
- bedtime; on the potty; in the car
- use books to calm or distract
- your child while waiting

- board books; rhyming books;
- picture books; books that
- name things

2 TO 3 YEARS

- learns to turn paper pages,
- 2 to 3 pages at a time
- starts to scribble

- adds 2-4 new words per day
- names familiar objects
- gives book to adult to read
- points at pictures
- turns book right-side up
- names pictures, follows
- simple stories

- ask "Where's the dog?" or
- "What is that?"
- be willing to read the same
- book again and again
- as you read, talk about the
- pictures
- keep using books in daily
- routines

- rhyming books; picture
- books that tell stories;
- search and find books

3 TO 4 YEARS

- turns pages one at a time,
- and from left to right
- sits still for longer stories
- scribbles and draws

- recites whole phrases
- from books
- moves toward letter
- recognition
- begins to detect rhyme
- pretends to read to dolls
- and stuffed animals

- asks "What happens next?"
- in familiar stories
- point out letters, numbers
- point out words and
- pictures that begin with
- the same sound
- together, make up stories
- about the pictures

- can listen longer
- recognizes numbers, letters
- can retell familiar stories
- can make rhymes
- learning letter names and
- sounds

- relate the story to your
- child's own experiences
- let your child see you
- read
- ask your child to tell
- the story
- encourage writing, drawing
- point out the letters in your
- child's name

- picture books that tell
- longer stories; counting
- and alphabet books

4 TO 5 YEARS

- starts to copy letters
- and numbers
- sits still for even longer
- stories

- can listen longer
- recognizes numbers, letters
- can retell familiar stories
- can make rhymes
- learning letter names and
- sounds

- fairy tales and legends;
- books with longer stories,
- fewer pictures

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