



Let's Talk

Your Child's Reading and Writing

“ My friend gave me a book at my baby shower. I was surprised when she told me that she started reading to her child, Evan, even before he was born. Now, Evan is 2 years old and talks a lot. She thinks it's because she read to him early and still does. I think that I'll read to my baby too! ”

—Laurie

How Can Talking Help My Child's Reading and Writing?

By listening, children can learn a lot of words. They can learn about things like colors, shapes, animals, and items around the house. This helps them to talk, and good talkers tend to be good readers.

You can help your child by:

- Making up silly words or rhyming words. “Playing” with sounds can help your child. It will teach him that words are made up of sounds. Have your child “read” a book to you. He can say the words when you read a familiar story.
- Having your child write a list for you. Ask her to help you do the food shopping. It doesn't matter if you can't read the words or if the words look like scribbling. Have her read the list to you.
- Pointing out the signs your child knows, like restaurants or stop signs. Talk about what they mean.
- Naming the things that you and your child can see, helping him to learn new words.
- Talking to your child about things you have done in the past. Help her retell stories of things she has done.
- Singing the alphabet song.

Fast facts

- You can get your child ready to read when he is born—talk to your child, read books, tell stories, sing songs, and point out and name things.
- Painting, drawing, or picking up things can teach your child skills that will help her learn to read and write.
- Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, can help.

What Are The Early Signs of Reading and Writing Problems?

Children who have trouble talking and understanding may have problems learning to read and write. Here are some questions that might help you see if your child needs help:

- Do your friends understand what your child says?
- Can she follow directions?
- Does he remember letters and the sounds they make?
- Does she like it when you read books to her?
- Can he remember the letters in his name?
- Does she learn and use a lot of words?
- Can he rhyme words like cat and bat?

If you answered “no” to a lot of these questions, your child might need some extra help.

How Can a Speech-Language Pathologist Help?

A speech-language pathologist, or SLP, works with people who have trouble communicating. If your child is having trouble talking or understanding what you say, you may want to visit an SLP.

The SLP will first talk with you and your child to learn about the kinds of problems your child is having. The SLP will also give some tests to learn more about the problem. If your child needs help, the SLP will work with your child to improve talking and early reading and writing skills.

“ I really enjoy my time reading with my son! He is 2 years old now. He is always giving me books for us to read together. I was surprised when he finished telling me his favorite story. I look forward to reading with him every day! ”

—Laurie

Reading and writing problems can change your child's life. Help is available.

To learn more about talking and reading development or disorders or to find an SLP near you who has been certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), visit www.asha.org or call 800-638-8255 or (TTY) 301-296-5650.

My SLP's name is

Appointment

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American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
and