

The H-N REACH EarlyON at Home

FAMILY NEWSLETTER



The fire of literacy is created by the sparks between a child, a book, and the person reading. It isn't achieved by the book alone, nor by the child alone, nor by the adult who's reading aloud - it's the relationship winding between all three, bringing them together in easy harmony.

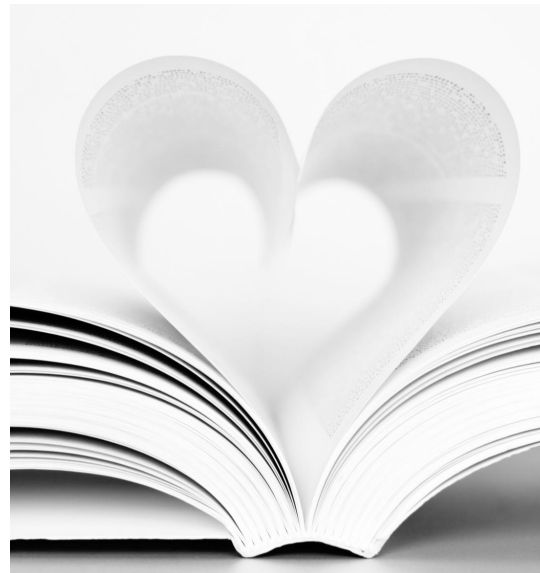
Mem Fox

EARLY LITERACY 101

When you hear the word 'literacy' - what comes to mind? If you thought 'reading and writing' - well, you're absolutely right! - but did you know that it goes far beyond that? Or should we say - far BEFORE that! Before a child can learn to read and write, they will go through an 'early literacy' phase where they first learn about language and communication. In fact, the early literacy phase begins as early as in the womb, when pregnant mothers begin to talk and sing to their unborn child. Not only are unborn babies already able to hear their mother's voice, they are also beginning to learn their mother's speech patterns, rhythms, and her language! From infancy, children learn many important things during the early literacy phase. They:

- Build vocabulary - and to build a vocabulary, a child must HEAR the vocabulary
- Learn how our language works and use it to tell stories, share ideas and ask questions
- Begin to write through drawing and scribbling
- Play with sounds of language through songs, rhymes and fingerplays
- Build their knowledge of the world around them
- Understand letter-sound connections
- Develop a love of literacy!

Retrieved from: <https://www.raisingreaders.org/understanding-early-literacy/>



HELPING YOUR CHILDREN BECOME READERS

Once upon a time, the EarlyON Centres (known as the Ontario Early Years Centres years ago) had a staff whose sole purpose was to educate and promote literacy in the early years. Today, all our staff are well educated and versed in the importance of early literacy (no matter what site you visit), but we'd like to share some wisdom from one of our past Early Literacy Specialists with her tips for parents:

It's never too soon to start your children on the path to reading!

- Simply talking to your children helps develop the vocabulary they will need as they enter school and begin to read
- Hearing words over and over helps your children become familiar with them. Reading to your children is one of the best ways to help them learn.
- As you point to and name objects, your children will begin to understand the meaning of words, and will eventually begin to incorporate those words into their vocabulary.

Seek out groups and organizations such as the EarlyON Centres or local libraries that can:

- Help you find age-appropriate books to use at home with your children.
- Show you creative ways to use books with your children and other tips to help them learn
- Provide year-round children's reading and educational activities

A child's love for reading grows when the words on the page come to life through experiences shared as a family!

Reading aloud and talking about what we're reading sharpens children's brains. It helps develop their ability to concentrate at length, to solve problems logically, and to express themselves more easily and clearly.

Mem Fox



Grocery Store Literacy

Shared by one of our amazing staff, Mari: I remember using a trip to the grocery store to have fun with literacy when our kids were pretty little. I would often give them a word to look for in an aisle and it would keep them pretty busy. Not only were they looking for words that were familiar to them, but it also gave me the opportunity to share words that were not familiar to them. It was always a great opportunity for interaction and conversations, a huge part of literacy!



5 WAYS TO PROMOTE EARLY LITERACY IN BABIES

1. Read to your baby every day
2. Narrate your day out loud - act it out in a running commentary. For example: "Oh - here we go - walking into the kitchen now!"
3. Limit electronic toys - there's not much room for imagination with an electronic toy.
4. Go screen-free - the World Health Organization says that children under the age of 1 should not have any screen time.
5. Drop the baby babble - they need to hear the vocabulary you want them to use!

Retrieved from: <https://www.becauseisaidsobaby.com/2016/09/5-simple-ways-to-promote-early-literacy/>

EARLY READING MILESTONES FOR EVERY AGE

So you already know early literacy begins even before birth - but do you know what it might look like at each age? Check out these milestones as your child grows:

Infants: Baby listens and imitates sounds, enjoys being held and read/sung to.

Toddlers: Shows preferences of books, helps with reading the story, turning pages and pointing. They also experiment with early drawing.

Preschoolers: Listens to their favourite books, stories and rhymes. Will recite and 'read' the book along with you or independently. Writing and drawing are more symbolic at this age.

Kindergarten: Recognizes and recites the alphabet, identifies and comes up with rhymes, and retells stories. They also begin to identify more words by sight and sound!



RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Inspire a love of literacy in the kitchen! Talk about your recipe, read it out loud, or even try to create your own! Don't forget to ask questions like "If I wanted to make cookies, what ingredients would I use?" Try this recipe - and feel free to read a book afterwards (like "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie" by Laura Numeroff)!

Fluffy Banana Cookies

2 ripe bananas, mashed
1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup chopped walnuts (or chocolate chips)
1 egg
1 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt



1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Place bananas, flour, sugar, butter, walnuts (or chocolate chips), egg, baking soda, and salt in a bowl. Mix until well combined.
3. Drop 3 tablespoonfuls of dough 2 to 3 inches apart onto baking sheet. Sprinkle sugar on top of cookies.
4. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown and edges are set, 15 to 20 minutes.

Rhyming Books

1. Bear Snores On by Karma Wilson
2. Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr.
3. The Nuts: Keep Rolling by Eric Litwin
4. Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae
5. Edward the Emu by Sheena Knowles
6. Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
7. Room on the Broom by Julia Donaldson
8. Over in the Meadow by Olive Wadsworth
9. The Going to Bed Book by Sandra Boynton
10. Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney
11. The Big Red Barn by Margaret Wise Brown
12. Brown Bear, Brown Bear by Bill Martin Jr



WE ARE STILL HERE FOR YOU!

Yes, things have changed a lot over the past month, but we are still here to help! Haldimand-Norfolk REACH is considered an essential service, and even though our sites are closed, we are working at home to stay connected with everyone, and to help those in need during these turbulent times.

If you or your child are in crisis, our Child and Youth Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 1-866-327-3224

Feel free to find us on Facebook - we are the Haldimand-Norfolk REACH EarlyON Child and Family Centre! We're always posting activity ideas, circle time videos and stories, and tips to stay healthy at home.

Have an idea you'd like to see us try? Email us at earlyon@hnreach.on.ca