

# YOUR GROWING READER

An invitation to the world of reading, from your library.





# HELLO NEW PARENT,

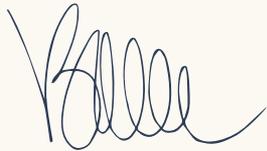
Congratulations! You are embarking on one of life's most rewarding and challenging experiences – raising a child.

Although kindergarten seems a long way off, one day your child will grow up to become a reader. The things you do and say in the next five years can greatly impact how your child learns to read. Fortunately, it's fun and easy to give your baby a strong start.

When you form a secure, loving bond with your baby, you set the stage for learning. Talking, singing, and sharing books every day – in any language – are wonderful ways to strengthen that bond.

You don't even need to read the words printed in a children's book. It's the interaction between you and your baby that matters most.

Multnomah County Library would like to support you in this amazing journey. We welcome all babies to visit the library, where you and your baby will find books, music, free storytimes and friendly librarians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vailey Oehlke', with a stylized, cursive script.

Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries



## CREATE A LOVING BOND

Babies who form a strong bond with their parents grow up to become adults who have stronger social relationships and reading skills. When your baby develops a sense of trust, he will learn more easily in school.

Cuddle your baby and talk in friendly tones. Talking face-to-face in a loving, responsive way increases the language connections in your baby's brain. Soon, he will make sounds in return. Your baby's cries, gurgles and coos, are his first conversations with you. When you respond, it helps him bond with you and build the confidence needed to learn.

## HAVE A CONVERSATION

Every friendly word your baby hears will help her get ready to learn. Babies who hear a wider variety of words before their second birthday have an easier time learning to read. How you talk with your baby will determine how well she uses language for years to come.

Have conversations, even before your baby can understand your words. Ask questions, echo her sounds, and sing songs and rhymes.

All languages are good for your baby. You may think that speaking English is the only way to help your baby develop as a reader. Not true!

When you use a language that you are comfortable speaking, your baby hears the rhythm and tones of everyday conversation. She absorbs what it sounds like to talk.





little dog

# 5 WAYS TO RAISE A STRONG READER





## READ

It's never too early to start reading and looking at books with your baby. Sharing books every day – in any language – makes a vital difference in how easy it will be for your child to learn to read.



## TALK

Your baby recognizes and loves the sound of your voice. Talking with your baby can seem strange at first, but keep at it. Hearing a wide variety of words builds vital brain connections.



## SING

Babies learn to hear rhythm in songs and rhymes. Even if you don't think you have a good singing voice, sing to your baby. Recite rhymes you learned as a child or make up rhymes of your own.



## WRITE

True, babies are not the best writers. But from birth, your baby is learning to move her arms and hands, and will soon pick up objects and make marks. These are skills that lead to writing.



## PLAY

The give and take of playing together boosts your baby's or toddler's confidence and curiosity for trying new things. Playing "peek-a-boo" or using simple blocks will delight your child, and will set the stage for learning.

IT SOUNDS EASY, AND IT IS. THESE  
FIVE ACTIONS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.

# BIRTH - 3 MONTHS



## TALK

The more you talk with your baby, the sooner he will talk to you. It's not too early to start having conversations. Making eye contact with your baby and talking gently to him builds a deep emotional connection. It makes him feel safe and secure enough to one day explore the world around him.

Hold your baby and catch his gaze. Smile, and talk softly. When your baby makes sounds in return, keep the conversation going by echoing him. Research shows that babies who hear a wide variety of words in their first year have an easier time learning to read.

## WRITE

From day one, your baby begins learning how to move his arms and hands. Around 3 or 4 months old, he will have the ability to reach for an object and promptly put it in his mouth. This handiness is called “fine motor” skills and will someday lead to writing.

## SING, PLAY

When you sing and say silly rhymes, you boost your baby's brain power. Post nursery rhymes over the changing table and say them whenever you change your baby's diaper. Play music for your baby. You don't need to learn many songs or rhymes. Repetition is good. Before long, your baby's face will perk up as if to say, “I recognize that!”

## READ

When babies are this young, you can read anything you wish — the newspaper, a novel, whatever — as long as your voice is friendly. Even though your baby does not understand the words, he loves hearing your voice and being close to you. Cuddle him on your lap and read for just a few minutes several times a day. Consider this quality time to get to know your baby.

Babies love books that rhyme, books with simple, large pictures, and books with connected, zigzag, fold-out pages that can be propped up for their eyes to follow. Sometimes, your baby may not look at the pictures at all. That's okay. If you keep reading to your baby and make it fun, he will be looking and listening soon.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

AS YOU READ THIS BOOK, REMEMBER THAT EVERY BABY GROWS AT A DIFFERENT PACE. WE HOPE YOU WILL HAVE FUN WITH THE IDEAS IN THIS BOOK FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

3 - 6

MONTHS



## TALK

As your baby grows, you will start to engage in playful “conversations.” She will look in your eyes, smile, babble, coo, and sometimes even give you “raspberries.” Smile in response. Treat every sound she makes as an attempt to talk to you – even burps and sneezes.

Talk to her even though she doesn’t yet understand the words. Narrate your day, talking about what you are doing, while you are doing it. Talk about toes and fingers and eyes and tummies during feeding. Say your baby’s name often. Tell her what is going to happen next: “I’m going to change your diaper now!”

## WRITE

By 6 months, your baby will be grasping toys and banging them on the table or waving them in the air. Since she’s starting to sit up, she will soon use both hands to grab soft cloth books and maybe even taste them. This is normal exploration and will help one day lead to writing.

## SING, PLAY

Sing songs and use your hands to play rhyming games like “Pat - A - Cake”. Finger plays will quickly become favorites with your baby. Though your baby is still too young to participate, she will watch your every move. Babies at this age discover and are delighted with their feet, so include rhymes that play with her toes.

## READ

Around 3 months old, your baby is ready for board books – the durable, simple books that are made for babies. Cuddle with her and watch how she explores the pages with her eyes. Stop and wait until she looks away before you turn the page.

Talk about the brightly colored pictures. You may not read every word of a book, or even any at all. But you can point to animals in the book and make their sounds. Your baby may make sounds or bat at the book to show her excitement. Or she may not look at the pictures at all. That’s okay, babies are always listening.

Read many times a day, even for just a few minutes. Be sure to make it relaxed and fun. The relationship you are developing with your baby is more important than reading an entire book.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

LIBRARIANS LOVE TO HELP PARENTS CHOOSE GREAT BOOKS TO READ WITH THEIR BABIES AND TODDLERS. COME SEE US! FIND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY ON THE MAP IN THE BACK OF THIS BOOK.

6 - 9  
MONTHS



## TALK

Your baby is trying out the sounds of the language he hears — and the sounds of the language he will later read. This is called babbling. Babbling is an important step toward talking and reading.

Soon he will begin putting sounds together (“agoo”) and repeating sound patterns (“bababa.”) Echo your baby’s sounds to encourage him to talk more.

Continue to narrate your day, telling him what you are doing. Say his name and other important names in your family.

## WRITE

By 9 months old, your baby will transfer a book from one hand to the other, and may begin to turn the pages or even throw the book. He is learning what his hands can do.

## SING, PLAY

Soon your baby will reach an important milestone—he will bring his hands together in the middle and try to clap. He’s learning to coordinate the two sides of his body. Gently hold your baby’s hands and show him how to clap with a game like “Pat-a-Cake.”

Songs and rhymes – in any language – let babies hear basic language patterns and rhythm. Sing while you do care-giving activities, like bathing your baby. Dance to emphasize the tempo of music, and watch his joy grow as he learns to recognize favorite songs.

## READ

If your baby reaches for a book and promptly puts it in his mouth, that’s okay. That’s how he learns about books! You can gently try to open the book and look at the pictures together.

Start in the middle if that is his favorite part. Books for babies usually have no story line, so you can start anywhere. Notice what he is looking at and talk about those objects. Point out something in a book and then show your baby the real life object, such as the teddy bear in a book and his teddy bear.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

COME TRY OUT *BOOK BABIES*—A FUN, FREE PROGRAM AT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY, WHERE YOU AND YOUR BABY CAN ENJOY SONGS, ACTION RHYMES, AND PLAYTIME WITH OTHER FAMILIES. EACH LIBRARY HAS ITS OWN SCHEDULE. SOME BRANCHES HOLD STORYTIMES IN SPANISH, RUSSIAN, CHINESE, VIETNAMESE, AND SOMALI IN ADDITION TO ENGLISH.

9 - 12  
MONTHS



## TALK

Your baby may be getting close to saying her first words. She is listening for cues from you, so use interesting words, speak clearly and slow down your speech. Notice what she is looking at and talk about it. Pay close attention to her attempts to “talk” with you – they may be subtle and easy to miss. Respond as if you two are having a real conversation, because you are!

Your baby’s language has grown so much that she can understand simple commands like “wave bye-bye” or “blow a kiss.” Play “Where’s sister?” Or “Where’s mommy?” with your baby. If she responds by looking at the correct person, nod your head and exclaim, “Yes, there’s \_\_\_\_\_.”

## WRITE

By the end of her first year, your baby is able to pick up small things with her thumb and index finger. Give her pieces of finger food to eat, and measuring cups to fill and dump. She may be ready to use large nontoxic crayons on paper. At first, she may put them in her mouth, but show her how to use the crayons to make marks on the paper.

## SING, PLAY

Holding, rocking and cuddling with your baby stimulates her brain to release hormones that promote learning and growth. Singing with your baby enhances her memory and increases her attention span. Fill your home with a variety of music. Play “Eensy, Weensy Spider” so she can try to imitate your actions. Babies love to learn about animals and the sounds they make, so “Old MacDonald” is always a favorite. Add songs and rhymes into your daily routines.

## READ

Exploration takes center stage as your baby becomes more mobile and curious. Because she is so busy, she may want to play with toys instead of sitting right beside you. That’s okay. Babies are always listening.

Some babies at this stage will point out pictures and make sounds. Listen carefully and respond as if you understand every word she says. Ask her simple questions, such as “Where is the\_\_\_\_?” She will probably point to the picture. If she does not respond, show her by pointing to the object and answering your own question, “There is the \_\_\_\_\_!”

If your baby gets excited about books, she may tear the pages. Your baby should not be scolded if a page is ripped. She’s too young to understand, and doesn’t have the hand coordination yet to be gentle. Think of books as an educational investment. Let your baby control the book. If she wants to turn the pages, let her. If your baby is not interested in books, remember to keep it short, sweet and fun – and keep reading.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

NOW THAT YOUR BABY IS GETTING BIGGER, MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY INVITES YOU TO COME TRY OUT *TINY TOTS*. THIS ACTION-PACKED PROGRAM ENGAGES NEW WALKERS AND GROWING TALKERS IN SONGS, MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES, RHYMES, BOOKS AND PLAYTIME. EACH LIBRARY HAS ITS OWN SCHEDULE. SEE THE INFORMATION ABOUT VISITING YOUR LIBRARY IN THE BACK OF THIS BOOK.

12 - 18  
MONTHS



## TALK

Babies all over the world typically say their first word around their first birthday, although the normal range is very wide — from 10 to 24 months. Even if your baby may not talk yet, he understands many, many more words than you might think.

Be supportive of his attempts to talk to you. Listen carefully, and respond positively. Soon your baby will begin saying many words and may even put two words together.

Babies younger than 18 months do not need to learn shapes, letters or numbers. Instead, allow your baby to explore and discover his world. Give him fun learning experiences and talk about what he is seeing and doing. Tell him the names of things he points to and shows interest in.

## WRITE

Your child's scribbles are his first attempts at beginning to write. Once a toddler sees the magic that appears when he uses an orange neon washable marker, he will be fascinated with writing and the tools to do it.

## SING, PLAY

Babies at this age are just beginning to sing, though it may sound more like jabbering. This is a fun time to teach new songs and use hand movements to old favorites, like “Eesny, Weensy Spider.” Do not expect perfection. Any attempt is terrific. Talk and sing with your baby anywhere you go, while cleaning up, on trips, on walks or in the car. Introduce your baby to new songs, but continue singing all the songs from his first year, because repetition is good.

## READ

Some babies at this stage will “book babble.” When your baby babbles, he sounds like he is “reading” the book. Rejoice! He is on his way to becoming a reader.

As your baby's vocabulary grows, his interest in books will grow, too. Read books that are related to actions he is learning, such as feeding himself with a spoon. Name objects in books and encourage him to repeat words. Ask him questions, and make connections between pictures in the book and items in your home.

If he wants to hold the book and turn the pages, let him. Give him books that offer flaps and textures he can explore. Don't worry if your baby wants the same book read over and over. Repetition helps him hear the different sounds that make up words. Repeating a favorite story gives your baby a sense of mastery.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

YOU MAY WONDER IF IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PLACE YOUR BABY IN FRONT OF THE TV TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO TALK. NOT TRUE! BABIES WHO SPEND MORE TIME IN FRONT OF THE TV ACTUALLY HAVE LESS DEVELOPED LANGUAGE THAN BABIES WHO WATCH LITTLE OR NO TV. IN FACT, THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS RECOMMENDS NO TV FOR YOUR BABY'S FIRST 2 YEARS.



18 - 24  
MONTHS

## TALK

Your baby is now a toddler, and she is working hard to put words together, such as “go out” or “more milk.” Encourage her by asking questions. Sometimes her words don’t sound exactly right, but that’s okay. Rather than telling her that she is wrong, just repeat her sentence and say the word correctly. She will hear the difference and begin to say it correctly.

## WRITE

Drawing and writing will likely capture your toddler’s attention and bring her joy for many months. Before long, she will begin to understand that marks can have meaning. She’ll begin to see that those squiggles on a page are letters that “say” something. Encourage her writing by providing lots of time and a variety of materials to do it.

## SING, PLAY

Rhyming leads to reading. Children who sing songs and recite rhymes learn to hear the different sounds in words. When children recognize that two words sound almost the same, such as “red” and “bed,” they are getting ready to read. Encourage your toddler by having fun with the sounds in silly words, like “wishy-washy” or “fuzzy-wuzzy.”

Your toddler may have favorite songs, action rhymes and finger plays and may want to do them repeatedly. That’s great! The repetition that your child enjoys may be tiresome for you, but it helps make brain connections and build the confidence she needs to learn.

## READ

Books feed your toddler’s desire for a rich variety of new words. Choose books that follow her interests. She may point to and name familiar objects and, if you pause while reading a favorite story, she may fill in the next word. Around 17 months, some children will pretend to read to their stuffed animals.

When sharing a book, ask questions and link the book to her experiences. “This dog is very big, just like grandpa’s dog.” If she says “Grandpa’s dog big,” expand her sentence by adding, “Yes, grandpa’s dog is big and noisy. He barks and barks.”

Follow her lead for how long she wants to read. Some days, she may want to cuddle with you and read book after book. Other days, she may be too busy running around. If so, you can read while she orbits the room — she’s still listening! Stash her favorite books in the car or in your bag, so she can read whenever she wants.

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### A NOTE FROM YOUR LIBRARIAN

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABOUT 2 YEARS OLD, SHE CAN “GRADUATE” TO TODDLER STORYTIME AT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY. TOGETHER WITH A FAVORITE ADULT, YOUR TODDLER WILL ENJOY INTERACTIVE STORIES, SONGS AND GAMES THAT HELP STRENGTHEN AND GROW HER NEW LANGUAGE SKILLS.

# 1 MORE WAY

to raise a curious learner and strong reader...

## VISIT YOUR LIBRARY!

You may think your baby will make too much noise or hurt the books, but that's not a problem at the library. Babies are welcome at all neighborhood libraries!

Library storytime is a wonderful way to introduce your baby to the joy of books. At every neighborhood library, enthusiastic librarians read age-appropriate books and share songs and rhymes with parents and babies.

Each branch has its own schedule. Some branches hold storytimes in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Somali in addition to English.

Check [www.multcolib.org/events/storytime.html](http://www.multcolib.org/events/storytime.html) for program dates and times. Parents and caregivers must stay and participate along with their children. All programs are free. We would love to see you there.



# LOCATIONS



1	ALBINA 3605 NE 15TH AVE 503.988.5362	2	BELMONT 1038 SE CESAR E. CHAVEZ 503.988.5382	3	CAPITOL HILL 10723 SW CAPITOL HWY 503.988.5385	4	CENTRAL LIBRARY 801 SW 10TH AVENUE 503.988.5123
5	FAIRVIEW-COLUMBIA 1520 NE VILLAGE ST 503.988.5655	6	GREGORY HEIGHTS 7921 NE SANDY BLVD 503.988.5386	7	GRESHAM 385 NW MILLER AVE 503.988.5387	8	HILLSDALE 1525 SW SUNSET BLVD 503.988.5388
9	HOLGATE 7905 SE HOLGATE BLVD 503.988.5389	10	HOLLYWOOD 4040 NE TILLAMOOK ST 503.988.5391	11	KENTON 8226 N DENVER AVE 503.988.5370	12	MIDLAND 805 SE 122ND AVE 503.988.5392
13	NORTH PORTLAND 512 N KILLINGSWORTH ST 503.988.5394	14	NORTHWEST 2300 NW THURMAN ST 503.988.5560	15	ROCKWOOD 17917 SE STARK ST 503.988.5396	16	SELLWOOD-MORELAND 7860 SE 13TH AVE 503.988.5398
17	ST. JOHNS 7510 N CHARLESTON AVE 503.988.5397	18	TROUTDALE 2451 SW CHERRY PARK RD 503.988.5355	19	WOODSTOCK 6008 SE 49TH AVE 503.988.5399		



WELCOME TO  
MIDLAND  
LIBRARY  
MULTNOMAH COUNTY  
LIBRARY

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