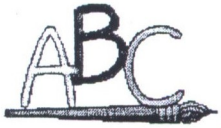


Ways to Support Your Child's Learning at Home

Here are some activities you can do at home to help promote literacy, math and fine motor skills. Nothing is more motivating to a child than toys, games and play! The activities below should be experienced as fun!



Literacy

Reading Books aloud is the #1 thing parents can do to install a high degree of competence and love of reading in their children (Don't forget to discuss what you read with your child).

Salt Box – Line a small box with black paper and add a thin layer of salt. Your child can write letters in the salt. Shake the box to "clean the slate." This also works with sand or shaving cream.

Sandpaper Letters – Cut the letters of your child's name out of sandpaper. Glue these onto a piece of cardboard. Your child can trace his/her name with his/her finger.

Magnetic Letters – Buy several sets of magnetic letters (upper & lowercase letters.) On the fridge or a cookie sheet, help your child find and group together all of the capital and lowercase B/b, then all of the D/d, etc. Talk about the letter's name and the sound it makes. Then find all the letters that make a "mmm" sound (M) or an "ssss" sound. You can make names or words (word wall, color, number, etc.). *Leap Frog* "Fridge Phonics" is great too!

Alphabet Books – Cut a piece of paper into fourths, staple them together on the side, and write a letter on the cover. Your child can cut pictures out of magazines that begin with the letter on the cover and glue them on the following pages. Label the pictures.

Finger Paints – Your child can smear finger paints on a piece of paper. Help him/her write his/her name or various letters or words with his/her finger. Wipe the slate clean, then try some more.

Play dough – Draw a letter, and have your child roll out pieces of play dough and fit and mold them together to make that letter's shape. Try lots of letters and words!

Spaghetti – Do the same as above with cooked spaghetti. Color small batches with food coloring to make it more fun.

Letter Hunt – Look for letters. Pick a letter of the day and see how many everyone in the family can find. Look on street signs, in books, etc. Make it a game!

Body Letters – Help your child make letter shapes with his/her body. Some letters, like L, your child will be able to make with his/her own body. Some, like M, will require two bodies.

Word Wall – Put up separate alphabet letters on pieces of paper on the wall. Write new words the child has mastered, cut them out and put them under the alphabet letter that has the same beginning sound.

Computer Software – Look for software that incorporates phonics into reading activities.

Post-its & Pens – Write single letters on small post-its and have your child stick the post-its on items around the house that begin with the same letter. (My personal favorite!)

Magnadoodle – This is great for the car when practicing fine motor skills, writing letters, words, word families, spelling words, etc.

Picture Sound Collage – Ask your child to search through magazines, newspapers, etc. for pictures that start with a certain letter/sound. Have them glue all the pictures they found on one sheet of paper to form a letter collage.

Alphabet Bingo – This game is wonderful for practicing letter names and sounds.

“I Spy” letter Sounds – “I spy something that begins with the sound of b.” (Make the letter sound)

Brainstorm – Give your child a sound and ask him/her to think of as many words as they can that start with the same sound.

ABC Tub Games – Get a butter dish or small bowl. Gather several household items that begin with the same letter sound and a few that don’t. Your child must figure out which items begin with the same sound and put them in the bowl.

Rhyming Words – Look for rhyming words in books, poetry, writing, etc. Practice making rhyming words with magnetic letters, pens and paper, on the computer, etc.

Play with letters - Saying people’s names and change the beginning sound. (For “B” change Mrs. Davenport to Brs. Bavenport)

Play the Robot Game - This involves talking like a robot with exaggerated pauses in each word. Then challenge your child to guess the word.

Onset and rime – bat becomes “b-at”

Segmentation – bat becomes “b-a-t”

Then ask your child to talk like a robot and you guess the word.

Tongue Twisters – Play with tongue twisters-traditional or made up! As you say the tongue twister emphasize the initial consonant. (Example: *Pink pigs play with purple pegs.*)

Poetry – Read lots of poetry to your child. Go back and look for words that start and/or end with the same letter, words that rhyme, capital letters, same endings, punctuation, etc.

Math



Count! Count anything! Some things that you can have your child count are: spoons, forks in the drawer, number of flowers in the garden, number of kids at the party, number of cars in line, etc.

Have your child count out groups of objects into little piles. (pennies, buttons, paper clips) "Can you put 15 fish crackers in your snack container for tomorrow?"

Play Chutes and Ladders, Candy Land, Checkers, etc.

Play simple cards games such as Crazy Eights, Old Maid, Go Fish, UNO, etc.

Provide hands on experiences related to basic facts to 10. For example, "If you have two crayons and I give you two more, then how many will you have?"

Teach your child to dial the phone. Make a phone book of Grandma and Grandpa and Cousin Fred's phone number.

Teach your child to set the timer on the microwave.

Discuss the numbers on a clock and start teaching time on the hour.

Teach your child to do dot to dots. Look in coloring books or activity books for dot to dots.

Have your child memorize his/her phone number. Any phone number can be sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Have your child do the switching of the TV channels. Use the remote control to point out the numerals and name.

Practice writing numbers the rainbow way (Writing each number a different color). This works for letters and words too.

Find numbers and letters to discuss wherever you go! Room numbers, elevator buttons, street numbers, road signs, price tags, business signs.



Fine Motor

Provide experiences related to drawing, coloring, cutting and gluing in order to develop fine motor skills.

Draw curly lines, shapes, mazes, and have your child trace them with a pencil. Then see if s/he can duplicate these shapes/lines/etc. by him/herself.

Provide activities to strengthen hand muscles using Lego's or Play dough.

Hide and retrieve marbles, buttons, and beads from play dough and emphasize the use of thumbs.

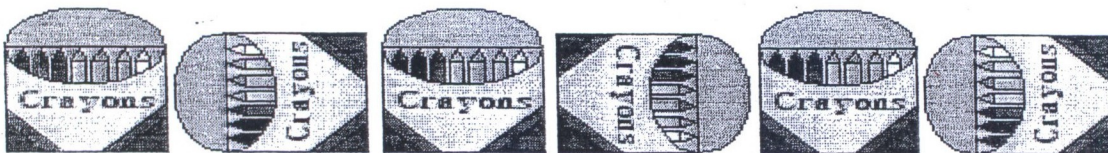
Ring out soaked sponges or washcloths

Independently fastening clothing such as zippers, snaps, buttons and tying laces

String spools of thread with buttons, fruit loops and macaroni. (Follow a pattern to encourage sequencing skills)

Use tweezers to pick up various objects like pom-pom balls, beads, and cotton balls.

Use a squirt gun or spray bottle.



Most Importantly - Have Fun!