

# CONVERSATION STARTERS



## Early Literacy



Children's language and literacy skills begin at birth through the everyday interactions we have with children. Children's oral language develops through our day to day conversations, sharing books, telling stories, singing songs and saying rhymes.

For babies, our interactions can be supported by the concept of 'serve and return' where a child initiates interaction, and an adult responds with a verbal or non-verbal response.

[Click here to read more about this concept.](#)

### WHAT WE KNOW FROM RESEARCH

- Reading to children daily promotes the learning of vocabulary.
- Daily reading improves learning outcomes regardless of family background and home environment.
- Words, letters and sounds are best understood when seen and applied in everyday experiences, rather than through learning the alphabet by rote or using phonics type toys.



“Talking to infants and toddlers about the **REAL** things they're doing is the most powerful, natural way for them to learn language”.

- Janet Lansbury

### HOW TO BE A TALKING, READING, WRITING, VIEWING AND LISTENING FAMILY WORDS OR PHRASES TO USE

(As cited in The Conversation, How to encourage literacy in young children (and beyond), July 11, 2017)

The following strategies will support children's literacy development:

1. Read what you are reading aloud to your newborn.
2. Share stories at mealtimes - what has been happening for you today?
3. Record on your phone, or write down, your child's stories. This shows children that their oral stories can be made into books, or recorded for listening to at another time.
4. Talk about their experiences.
5. Guide literacy in your children's play, following their lead.
6. Books, books, books.
7. Talk about words children notice.
8. Involve your children in activities where you use literacy.
9. Use community and state libraries.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The Australian Parenting Website, Raising Children, has a number of articles and resources on early literacy and language development. We have included a couple for you but also encourage you to search this site.

[Click here to read more about language development in children.](#)

[Click here to read more about reading and storytelling with babies and children.](#)



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