



Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development at Home Tutorial

TRANSCRIPT

Introduction

Welcome to the National Center on Improving Literacy's module on supporting your child's literacy development at home. Taking part in your child's literacy development can improve your child's reading ability, comprehension, and language skills. It can also improve your child's interest in reading, attitude toward reading, and focus. This module is part one of a four-part series on key roles that families can play for children's literacy success. Click the bar to continue.

NCIL

The National Center on Improving Literacy's mission is to increase access to, and use of, evidence-based approaches to screen, identify, and teach pre-K to grade 12 students with literacy-related disabilities, including dyslexia. This module expands upon information in NCIL's supporting your child's literacy development at home literacy brief and infographic. Click the supporting your child's literacy development at home icon to access the literacy brief and infographic and click the NCIL icon to learn more about the National Center on Improving Literacy.

Navigation Tips

Here are some tips for navigating the module. Press the right arrow key or left arrow key to move to the next or previous screen at any time. Use the tab key to tab through the slide and the enter key to activate a feature. Click the closed caption icon to enable closed captioning while watching videos in this module.

Find the Right Information

To find the right information on supporting your child's literacy development, click the picture best matched to your child's age - preschool, elementary, or adolescent.

Section 1 Preschool: Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development

This section will provide information on supporting the literacy development of your preschool child. Click the bar to continue.

Four Keys Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy Development

Parents and caregivers play an important role in supporting children's literacy development,

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



especially when children are having difficulty. You can support your child in four key ways - by listening, looking, helping, and encouraging - while you and your child participate in activities together. As you try out the literacy tips and activities in this module with your child, you can:

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child when reading aloud or talking.
- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

Talk with your child's early childhood provider or pediatrician to be sure that you're supporting your child in skills that are developmentally appropriate.

Table of Contents

This section of the module will provide you with information on how you can support your preschool child's literacy development by talking with your child, helping your child with speech sounds and letters, talking about books with your child, reading with your child, and asking questions when talking about or reading books. You can click on the topic to go right to that information or click Next to start at the beginning.

Talking With Your Child 1

Talking with your child - Talking with your child helps your child to learn about letters and letter sounds, learn new words and ideas, practice hearing and saying words, and practice talking back and forth.

Talking With Your Child 2

Watch the video to learn how talking with your child can develop his language and early literacy skills. When finished, click on read tip for more information.

Talking With Your Child 3

Talk with your child during playtime and other daily activities. Play with letters and their sounds, make up rhymes, and participate in pretend play and storytelling.

Talking With Your Child 4

Aim for thick conversations with your child. Thick conversations are extended back-and-forth exchanges between an adult and child. Click watch video to learn more. When finished, click see example.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Talking With Your Child 5

Try these strategies to have thick conversations. Ask your child WH questions, who, what, where, when, and why. Repeat all or part of your child's answer to encourage him to say more. Give new information about the topic. Click each try it out for how to do these strategies yourself.

Talking With Your Child 6

What does a thick conversation sound like? Click watch video to see it in action.

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds & Letters 1

Helping your child with speech sounds and letters - Helping your child with speech sounds and letters helps your child hear how language works, learn that letters relate to spoken sounds, link letters to their sounds, and read works later. Be sure to check with your child's early childhood provider to see what skills your child is learning so you can practice at home.

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds & Letters 2

Noticing rhymes show how language works. Rhymes are words that sound the same when spoken. Rhyme is found in poetry, songs, and many children's books and games. You can sing or listen to nursery rhymes, like Jack and Jill, Humpty Dumpty, or Baa, Baa, Black Sheep. Click see it in action to hear one. You can read rhyming books. Many books for young children have rhyming patterns in them. Check with your local librarian for help finding books with rhyming words. Click get started for a list of books. Or, you can play rhyming games. You can match pictures of things that rhyme, find objects around the house that rhyme with one another, or just say a real word and make up a silly rhyme for it. Click try it out for how to do it yourself.

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds & Letters 3

Learning letters and letter sounds support early reading success. You can use alphabet toys to make letter and letter sound learning exciting. Try letter blocks, magnetic letters, alphabet puzzles, and letter stamps. Make letter shapes with playdough, bath bubbles, chalk, or paper. Click try it out for how to do it yourself. You can sing songs like Bingo or play games like I Spy to make letter and letter sound learning fun. For example, "I spy something that starts with the letter F. Remember what sound F makes? /f/, /f/, can you guess what I see?" "There's a farmer who had a dog, And Bingo was his name-o. B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O and Bingo was his name-o. Repeat and each time replace a clap for the next letter. Try using names of family members and friends. Click to see it in action. Finally, encourage your child's interest in letters and their sounds. Let your child tell you the letters in his name, name other familiar letters, or say letter sounds. Show how letters are matched with sounds. Keep it playful.

Talking About Books With Your Child 1

Talking about books with your child - Talking about books with your child helps your child see that pictures stand for real things, learn that print tells a story, find new ways to say things, and learn new words.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Talking About Books With Your Child 2

What does it mean to talk about a book? Click on watch video to learn more about how talking with your child about a book can develop his language and early literacy skills.

Talking About Books With Your Child 3

Click on each tip to learn strategies for talking about books with your child. When talking about books with your child, you can talk about what you both see in the pictures. Name the colors, shapes, and objects. Talk about what is happening in the story. Guess what might happen next in the story. Make connections between the book and your life or what you know.

Talking About Books With Your Child 4

Click on each circle for more strategies for talking about books with your child. Expand - Expand on your child's response by adding a few more words. For example, Yes, it's a big, red, fire truck. Repeat - Ask your child to repeat what you said. For example, Yes, it's a big, red, fire truck. Can you say that? Caution - Do not point out errors when you expand and repeat. Instead, repeat what your child said using correct pronunciation. For example, if your child says burn instead of brown, you can say that's right, a brown cocoon. Support - Say all the sounds in the word slowly and clearly for your child. This focuses his attention on the sounds and the way your mouth looks when making them /b - r - ow - n/.

Talking About Books With Your Child 5

Unsure of how to go about talking about books with your child? Watch the video to learn more tips.

Reading With Your Child 1

Reading with your child - Reading with your child helps your child learn new sounds, words, and ideas; link letters to their sounds; learn how books work; and develop an interest in reading.

Reading With Your Child 2

Click watch video to hear Dr. Maryanne Wolf discuss the importance of reading books with your child.

Reading With Your Child 3

Click on each tile to learn more about reading with your child. Reading with your child means you and your child read and talk about the book together. It is interactive. This interactive conversation is a fun, purposeful way to share ideas. Read pictures, words, or use audiobooks. Label objects around the house and read them too. Read and talk in the language you and your child feel most comfortable.

Reading With Your Child 4

You can get ready to read by finding a quiet, cozy spot so you both can listen and talk, let your child pick a book or choose one that matches her interests. Young children love to re-read the same book and that is great! Finally, follow your child's lead and keep it fun.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Reading With Your Child 5

When reading with your child, make it interactive. Interactive reading engages your child by having her discuss the story or narrative. Click watch video to learn more. When finished, click try it out for how to do it yourself.

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 1

Asking questions when talking about or reading books - Asking questions when talking about or reading books helps your child think in new ways, consider new words and ideas; explain her thinking; and make sense of letters, sounds, and words.

Slide 2.25: Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 2

Asking questions helps to make talking about or reading books interactive. Click on watch video to learn more.

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 3

The word Crowd can help you remember different kinds of questions to ask. C stands for completion, r for recall, o for open-ended, w for wh prompts, and d for distancing. Click next to learn more.

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 4

Completion - ask your child to fill in the blank using words from the story after it is repeated several times or once it is very familiar. For example, And the caterpillar turned into a beautiful...

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 5

Recall - Ask your child to tell you what happened in the story. For example, can you tell me two foods the caterpillar ate?

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 6

Open-ended - Ask your child what is happening in a picture or story to get her talking. For example, tell me about the caterpillar. Why do you think the caterpillar was so hungry?

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 7

Wh prompts - Ask your child who, what, where, when, and why questions. For example, what other foods might a caterpillar eat? Where does a caterpillar turn into a butterfly? Why do you need to eat?

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 8

Distancing - Ask your child to connect to something in her own life. For example, what do you think would happen if you ate that much?

Asking Questions When Talking About or Reading Books 9

Engage your child by asking questions before, during, and after reading. Click on each idea to learn more.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Before Reading

Before reading, look at the cover and talk about what the story might be about. For example, let's read the title and look at the picture. What do you think this story might be about?

During Reading

During reading, ask your child about letters, sounds, words, or ideas. For example, can you find a letter in your name? Can you say a word that sounds like bat? What would happen if your friend wanted to play with your toy? Why is the boy sad?

After Reading

After reading, ask your child what happened in the story. Have her make connections. For example, what was the story about? What does this story remind you of? What did you like about the story?

Quiz Questions

Think about what you've learned about supporting your child's literacy development at home to help Andrew. Andrew has a five-year-old child. They speak English and another language at home. What could Andrew do to support his child's literacy development at home? Choose the answer that best fits. Read and talk together, sing nursery rhymes, and tell stories; use whatever language is comfortable when talking and reading; use daily activities as ways to build language and literacy skills; play with spoken words and sounds; or all of the above. Click submit after choosing your answer.

Four Keys Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy Development

We hope you've learned some helpful tips and activities to support your child's literacy development. Remember, you can listen, look, help, and encourage while you and your child participate in activities together.

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child when reading aloud or talking.
- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

If you notice your child having trouble participating in these activities, even after lots of practice, share it with your child's early childhood provider or pediatrician. Discuss activities and strategies that best match your child's specific learning needs and work together to support her language and literacy development.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



How Can I Learn More (Resource Repository)

Want to learn more? Search the NCIL Resource Repository for literacy resources and activities you can do with your child at home or in your community. Sort by audience, topic area, and resource type to find resources matched to skills identified in this module. Click the icon to take you there.

How Can I Learn More (Kid Zone)

Also visit the Kid Zone at improvingliteracy.org with your child to read and listen to books and play literacy games. Click the icon to take you there.

You've Now Completed This Section

You have now completed the section on supporting the literacy development of your preschool child. Thank you for your participation. If you'd like to return to the main menu, click the bar.

Section 2 Elementary: Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development

This section will provide information on supporting the literacy development of your elementary child. Click the bar to continue.

Four Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy Development

Parents and caregivers play an important role in supporting children's literacy development, especially when children are having difficulty. You can support your child in four key ways - by listening, looking, helping, and encouraging - while you and your child participate in activities together. As you try out the literacy tips and activities in this module with your child, you can:

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child and what he sounds like when reading aloud.
- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

Talk with your child's teacher to be sure that you're supporting your child in literacy skills that he has already been taught in school, so that the activities provide practice. Tools for reading, like screen readers and other technology devices may be available for your child.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Table of Contents

This section of the module will provide you with information on how you can support your elementary child's literacy development by reading with your child, helping your child understand what is read, helping your child with speech sounds, helping your child sound out words, and reading together to develop fluency. You can click on the topic to go right to that information or click Next to start at the beginning.

Reading With Your Child 1

Reading with your child - Reading with your child helps your child learn new words and ideas; understand the purposes for reading; hear what reading sounds like; develop thinking and problem-solving skills; and enjoy reading and learning.

Reading With Your Child 2

Reading with your child can promote her reading development. Click watch video to listen to Dr. Jeanne Wanzek discuss how you can support your child's literacy development at home.

Reading With Your Child 3

Click on each tile to learn more about reading with your child. Reading with your child means you and your child read and talk about the book together. It is interactive. This interactive conversation is a fun, purposeful way to share ideas. Read pictures, words, or use audiobooks. Try reading both fiction and informational books. Read and talk in the language you and your child feel most comfortable.

Reading With Your Child 4

You can get ready to read by finding a quiet, cozy spot so you both can listen and talk, let your child pick a book or choose one that matches her interests. It can be a book slightly harder than she can read on her own. Finally, follow your child's lead and keep it fun.

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 1

Helping your child understand what is read - Ask smart questions to help your child understand what she reads. Ask questions that your child can answer with more than one or two words. Ask questions that have your child use information from the story to answer. Ask wh questions - who, what, where, when, and why - and how questions. Ask questions about ideas or words from the book.

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 2

You can ask questions about stories or fiction books, which have a made-up chain of events, or informational or nonfiction reading material, which tell facts about the world. Children often read stories and informational reading material for different reasons and use different strategies to make sense of what they're reading. Click stories and informational material to see questions for each. Stories - Why did the character do what he did? What else could she have done? If you were in the story, what would you have done? Informational material - Why do birds fly South for the winter? What would happen if you planted a tree in the desert? Why

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



is it important to recycle?

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 3

Try to read both stories and informational material with your child, like magazines, newspapers, and instructional manuals. Informational reading material, especially on topics matched to your child's interests, can motivate and help her persist when reading is difficult. It also builds your child's background knowledge on topics she wants to know more about. Why else should you read informational books with your child? Click watch video to learn more.

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 4

You can ask questions that help your child to make connections or take a guess. Click on each idea to find out more. Questions can direct your child to make connections to her life, what your child knows, or the ideas in the book. Questions can direct your child to take a guess about what the story might be about, what might happen next, or why a character did something. Help your child use the book title, pictures, or information read as clues.

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 5

Engage your child by asking questions before, during, and after reading. Click on each idea to learn more.

Before Reading

Before reading, look at the cover and talk about what the story might be about. For example, let's read the title and look at the picture. What do you think this story might be about?

During Reading

During reading, ask your child about letters, sounds, words, or ideas. Make connections between the book and what your child knows. Look for words your child doesn't know and talk about what the words mean. For example, that's the word exhausted. It means to feel so tired you can hardly move. What's the word?

After Reading

After reading, ask your child what happened in the story. Have her make connections. For example, what was the story about? Why is it important to know about...? What was the problem? How was the problem solved? Click try it out for questions to ask your child when reading fiction and information books or nonfiction.

Helping Your Child Understand What is Read 6

Want to see what asking questions look like when reading with a child? If so, click watch video to see an extended 16 minute video clip of asking questions in action.

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds 1

Helping your child with speech sounds - Learning how speech can be broken into parts lays the foundation for breaking smaller sound parts in speech. Be sure to check with your child's teacher to see what skills your child is learning so you can practice at home.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds 2

Show your child how she can break down sentences into words. Say a sentence aloud and ask your child to count or tap the number of words in the sentence. For example, say slowly, the boy ate two pieces of pizza. Your child then says each word while counting or tapping them. Click try it out for how to do it yourself.

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds 3

Next, talk about how some words can be broken down into smaller words and how to put two words together to make another word. You say, sometimes you can put two words together to form another word. For example, if I put straw and berry together, I get strawberry. What do you get if you put book and shelf together? Your child says, bookshelf. You say, that's right! You can also break some words into smaller words. What do you get if you take the cow out of cowboy? Your child says, boy? You say, that's right!

Helping Your Child With Speech Sounds 4

Once successful, help your child break words into syllables. A syllable is a part of a word that has one vowel sound. Place your hand under your chin and notice together the number of times your chin moves down as you say a word slowly. Now have your child try. Hold up or tap a finger for each syllable as you say a word. Now have your child try. Click try it out for syllable games and information.

Helping Your Child Sound Out Words 1

Helping your child sounds out words - Correctly linking sounds to letters to sound out words helps your child read new words, recognize familiar words, and understand what is being read. Be sure to check with your child's teacher to see what skills your child is learning so you can practice at home.

Helping Your Child Sound Out Words 2

Want to check your letter sound pronunciations? Click each video to hear the correct way to say each consonant and vowel sound.

Helping Your Child Sound Out Words 3

Stretch and connect sounds together as much as possible to help your child sound out words. Sounding out words smoothly helps children remember and combine sounds to arrive at the correct word. Here is an example with the word man. You say, how does this word start? Your child says, /mmm/. You say, then what's the next sound? Your child says, /aaa/. You say, and then what sound comes next? Your child says, /nnn/. You say, what happens when you put them together? Your child says, /mmmaaannn/. You say, what is the word? Your child says, man!

Helping Your Child Sound Out Words 4

After your child connects the sounds together for a known word, ask: does the word make sense? Is it a real word? Do you know that word? Have your child check that the letters and

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



sounds match. For an unknown word, have your child read the word again. Make sure he joined all the sounds together correctly. Then, discuss the word's meaning.

Reading Together to Develop Fluency 1

Reading together to develop fluency - Fluency is the ability to read words, phrases, sentences, and stories correctly, with enough speed and expression. Reading aloud frequently helps your child develop reading fluency. You can use everyday items around your house or in your community as reading material. Click read tip for some examples.

Reading Together to Develop Fluency 2

When reading aloud together, set a steady pace. Slow down for difficult words and speed up once your child is comfortable. Make sure the book is right for your child's reading ability. Show your child how you read like you talk so she can hear fluent reading.

Reading Together to Develop Fluency 3

Here are some approaches to try when reading aloud together. Take turns reading continuous passages of a book. For example, you read passage A, your child reads passage B, and you read passage C. Read the same passage of a book aloud at the same time. For example, you and your child read passage A. Or, read a passage of a book aloud and then have your child read the same passage aloud. For example, you read passage A, then your child reads passage A.

Reading Together to Develop Fluency 4

Building reading habits can set the stage for fluency development. Click watch video to learn more.

Quiz Question

Think about what you've learned about supporting your child's literacy development at home to help Jane. Jane has a child in fifth grade who is reading to learn in science and social studies. What could Jane do to support her child's word learning and understanding of new ideas? Choose the answer that best fits. Play word games and talk about interesting or unfamiliar words; read with her child; ask questions before, during, and after reading; or all of the above. Click submit after choosing your answer.

Four Keys Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy Development

We hope you've learned some helpful tips and activities to support your child's literacy development. Remember, you can listen, look, help, and encourage while you and your child participate in activities together.

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child and what he sounds like when reading aloud.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

If you notice your child having trouble participating in these activities, even after lots of practice, share it with your child's teacher. Discuss activities and strategies that best match your child's specific learning needs and work together to support her literacy development.

How Can I Learn More (Resource Repository)

Want to learn more? Search the NCIL Resource Repository for literacy resources and activities you can do with your child at home or in your community. Sort by audience, topic area, and resource type to find resources matched to skills identified in this module. Click the icon to take you there.

How Can I Learn More (Kid Zone)

Also visit the Kid Zone with your child to read and listen to books and play literacy games. Click the icon to take you there.

You've Now Completed This Section

You have now completed the section on supporting the literacy development of your elementary child. Thank you for your participation. If you'd like to return to the main menu, click the bar.

Section 3 Adolescent: Supporting Your Child's Literacy Development

This section will provide information on supporting the literacy development of your adolescent child. Click the bar to continue.

Four Keys Ways to Support Your Child's Literacy Development

Parents and caregivers play an important role in supporting children's literacy development, especially when children are having difficulty. You can support your child in four key ways - by listening, looking, helping, and encouraging - while you and your child participate in activities together. As you try out the literacy tips and activities in this module with your child, you can:

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child and what he sounds like when reading aloud.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

Talk with your child's teacher to be sure that you're supporting your child in literacy skills that he has already been taught in school, so that the activities provide practice. Tools for reading, like screen readers and other technology devices may be available for your child.

Table of Contents

This section of the module will provide you with information on how you can support your adolescent's literacy development by reading with your child, engaging in conversations, offering a literacy-rich environment, modeling reading and writing behaviors, being a media mentor, and motivating your child to read. You can click on the topic to go right to that information or click Next to start at the beginning.

Reading With Your Child

Reading with your child - Reading with your child helps your child build background knowledge of topics; discuss ideas and issues; see a model of what good reading sounds like; and learn words and how language works

Engaging Your Child in Conversations 1

Engaging in conversations with your child - When engaging in conversations with your child, talk about school, friends, or current events. For example, discuss everyday life at mealtimes, when traveling in the car, or before bed. Ask questions about what your child is reading and listen to his answers. Discuss information read together. Talk about the author's message, issues raised, information learned, and his reactions to what was read. Click read tip for more information about developing conversation skills in your child.

Engaging Your Child in Conversations 2

Being able to hold a meaningful conversation is an important skill for adolescents to have for school and life. Does your teen have this key communication skill? Click watch video to find out.

Engaging Your Child in Conversations 3

During conversations about what your child is reading, you can ask questions to make sure he is understanding what is read. See if he can identify key ideas and the sentences from the book that support them, figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words, and support him if reading gets difficult.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Engaging Your Child in Conversations 4

Click watch video to learn about how to check if your teen is understanding what is read.

Engaging Your Child in Conversations 5

Ask questions that allow your child to think more deeply about what he is reading. These questions require more than a "yes/no" answer and often have your child explain his thinking. For example, what is the author trying to say? Why do you think the author used that phrase? Questions that prompt your child to compare and contrast points of view and form their own opinion based on information from the reading material are especially important.

Engaging Your Child in Conversations 6

Different types of questions help your child process what he learned and grow his understanding. Here are some question prompts to promote deeper thinking about what your child is reading. What questions would you ask if...? What was the problem with...? Do you think...? How would you...? Click read tip for more information about how to promote deeper, or higher-order thinking, in your child.

Offering a Literacy-rich Environment 1

Offering a literacy-rich environment - A literacy-rich environment is a place that encourages reading and writing, such as listening to stories, reading together, and talking about ideas. To offer a literacy-rich environment, you can have a variety of reading material at home, like magazines, books, and instructional manuals. See what your child picks up as a clue to his interests. Look for reading material that builds on your child's interests, like sports teams, hobbies, popular culture, or issues facing teens. Finally, let your child choose what he reads.

Offering a Literacy-rich Environment 2

Wondering what kinds of reading material to have at home? Try fiction and informational books, magazines, newspapers, comics, articles, and blog posts. You can find many of these and other reading material at your local public library; book, thrift, and dollar stores; and yard sales. Consider borrowing reading material from friends. Remember, different kinds of reading material can be found online too. Click read tip for information on how to help your teen choose a book.

Modeling Reading and Writing Behaviors 1

Modeling reading and writing behaviors - You can model reading and writing behaviors for your child by reading and writing yourself. For example, reading the newspaper, reading online or using an ereader, listening to audiobooks, or making to-do lists. Read and write together. For example, you can read the same book along with your child, try partner reading, or participate in a book club. Blogging and mobile storytelling are fun ways to engage in writing. Show how reading and writing is related to other activities, like planning a trip, adopting a pet, and learning a new skill. Click read tip to find out how to support your teen's writing development and click try it out to learn how to read together.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Being a Media Mentor 1

Being a media mentor - You can be a media mentor for your child by showing and telling what you are doing online and why. For example, describe how you are using an online mapping tool to find the closest movie theater or why you are using a video call to connect with someone. Help your child to be an educated consumer of information on the internet. Check the source of the information together. Emphasize the need to analyze and think critically about information and images on the internet. Talk about the quality and usefulness of information. Discuss how the source presents the information and why, how to check if the information is correct, and if the information is matched to your child's purpose. These skills are important ones for researching a topic.

Being a Media Mentor 2

Does your teen have the skills needed to research a topic? Click watch video to find out.

Motivating Your Child to Read 1

Motivating your child to read - You can motivate your child to read by following your child's lead. Talk with her about her lack of interest in reading. Listen and acknowledge your child's reasons. Adolescents are expected to read a lot of long and often difficult material for school. It is easy for them to get tired of reading, especially if your child only associates reading with school. Talk to your child about how reading can be enjoyable and even fun. Find a place to read for fun that is different from the place for school, one that is inviting and relaxing. Separate reading for school and reading for fun. Sometimes teens go through times where they might not be motivated to read or write. That's okay. Continue to provide an environment that encourages your child to do so. Eventually, he will be interested again. Listen to podcasts and audiobooks in the car or have your child try comics, graphic novels, and series, which can be appealing to teens.

Motivating Your Child to Read 2

Want to promote a love of reading in your teen? Click watch video to learn how.

Quiz Question

Think about what you've learned about supporting your child's literacy development at home to help Jen. Jen has a daughter who reads slower than her peers. She reads to complete school assignments but does not read much otherwise. She'd rather play soccer and spend time with her friends. What could Jen do to support her child's literacy development at home? Choose the answer that best fits. Have a variety of reading material, like magazines, comics, and articles available; discuss information read together; build off her interests and let her choose what to read; separate reading for school and reading for fun; or all of the above. Click submit after choosing your answer.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.



Key Ways to Support Your Child’s Literacy Development

We hope you’ve learned some helpful tips and activities to support your child’s literacy development. Remember, you can listen, look, help, and encourage while you and your child participate in activities together.

- Listen and note which sounds, letters, words, or ideas seem hard for your child and what he sounds like when reading aloud.
- Look and watch for the skills or tasks that appear difficult for your child. See if they improve with practice.
- Help by pausing and giving your child a chance to correct a mistake. Then try giving her a hint or prompt to figure it out.
- Encourage by talking with your child about the book or activity. Offer praise when successful and reassure him when difficulties arise.

If you notice your child having trouble participating in these activities, even after lots of practice, share it with your child’s teacher. Discuss activities and strategies that best match your child’s specific learning needs and work together to support her literacy development.

How Can I Learn More (Resource Repository)

Want to learn more? Search the NCIL Resource Repository for literacy resources and activities you can do with your child at home or in your community. Sort by audience, topic area, and resource type to find resources matched to skills identified in this module. Click the icon to take you there.

You’ve Completed This Section

You have now completed the section on supporting the literacy development of your adolescent child. Thank you for your participation. If you’d like to return to the main menu, click the bar.

The research reported here is funded by awards to the National Center on Improving Literacy from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (Award #: S283D160003). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of OESE, OSEP, or the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright National Center on Improving Literacy.