



# PLAY

Children learn a lot through play, as it is a powerful way for children to connect what they know to the world, using language and imagination.

- Provide plenty of playtime for your child, where they can use their imaginations to create stories.
- Through pretend play your child is practicing putting thoughts into words.
- Dramatic play develops your child's narrative skills as they make up stories with order (first, next, last).
- Use puppets and props to re-tell stories your child knows.



# Help Your **CHILD** be Ready to **READ!**

Talk, sing, read, write, and play when engaging with your young child, as you are your child's first teacher!



## TALK



## SING



## READ



## WRITE



## PLAY

*Ready to Read Michigan* is a program of the Library of Michigan, with support provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This program is based off the 5 Practices of Every Child Ready to Read® project of the Association for Library Service to Children and the Public Library Association, divisions of the American Library Association.



LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN

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## Early Literacy and Your Child



LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN

The Library of Michigan's *Ready to Read Michigan* program encourages reading aloud regularly to children during the early stages of life (birth up to age 5), as it ensures the development of early literacy skills and instills a love of reading. Early literacy is everything a child knows about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. Parents and caregivers who understand the importance of early literacy - and who take time every day to read, talk, and sing with their child, and provide them with opportunities to write and play - can help ensure their child begins school ready to read. To learn more go to [www.mi.gov/readytoread](http://www.mi.gov/readytoread). Your local public library offers storytimes and early literacy programming, as well as circulating books and children's music to families. Be sure to check with a local librarian for program information and reading recommendations.

## TALK

Talking to your child and giving them many opportunities to talk helps them build a large vocabulary and increases their ability to describe events and tell stories.

- Speak in your first language to your child, so that you are fluent to help explain the meanings of words better.
- Take a "picture walk" with your child when reading, taking turns in the conversation with your child. Picture walks help your child to make connections to stories.
- Ask your child questions that encourage longer answers, not just "yes" or "no."
- Use new words with your child, repeating them in different conversations.

## SING

Singing helps your child learn language, as it slows language down and allows children to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

- Songs have notes for different syllables, which helps your child break down words.
- Clapping along with nursery rhymes and songs helps break down the syllables.
- Songs about the alphabet teaches your child their letters, which they quickly learn, make words.



## READ

Reading aloud is the single most important activity for your child's reading success.

- Make reading engaging and interactive.
- Remember, very young children do not sit still long. Let them move around as you read aloud for short periods of time.
- Books provide new words that you do not use in every day conversations.
- Ask open-ended questions when reading, such as, "What do you think is going to happen next?" Give your child time to respond before giving them a cue to turn the page.



## WRITE

Reading and writing go together, as they represent language. Children learn about letters, words and stories when given the chance to try writing on their own.

- Once your child is old enough to grasp a thick crayon, give them blank paper and plenty of opportunities to scribble.
- Talk with your child about what they are drawing and make up stories with them about art and pictures.
- Encourage your young child to start "signing" their names on their artwork.

