

Sprinkles to Support Early Childhood Development in Your Children

In support of the [Early Childhood Mapping Project](#) (ECMap) Edmonton Public Library (EPL) has developed ideas for parents and caregivers to strengthen early literacy in 5 key developmental areas.

If a developmental area that needs more attention we invite you to incorporate some of our suggested activities into daily life. Every child will benefit from early literacy activities, language-rich environments and meaningful interactions with adults in their lives, so explore all the developmental areas and talk, read, write, play and sing together!

Visit www.epl.ca/readtalkplay for more information about early literacy, and come to library programs to help your child build all 5 developmental skills.

Emotional Maturity:

Child is able to express emotions at an age-appropriate level, can empathize with others, able to reflect before acting, not too fearful and not too impulsive.

- Choose stories, songs, and rhymes that explore emotions and explore them together.
- Perform songs and stories by using exaggerated facial expressions and emotional emphasis.
- Encourage children to express emotions based on the storyline or characters. Have children act out feelings using facial expressions, body language and/or sounds.
- Talk with children about the emotional aspects of the story. For example ask questions like: How would you feel in this situation? Show me how you would express that emotion? Tell a story about a time you felt that way? Can you tell me what this character might be feeling? Have the children identify the emotion from the picture.
- Provide clear routines and transitions for daily tasks i.e. tell children what's coming in advance and prepare them for what will happen at the end of each activity. Using songs, rhymes or play routines with transitions can really help.

Recommended books:

- [Boo Hoo Bird](#) – Jeremy Tankard
- [Finn Throws a Fit](#) – David Elliott
- [Leonardo the Terrible Monster](#) – Mo Willems

- [Scaredy Squirrel](#) – Melanie Watt
- [No, David!](#) - David Shannon

Social Competence:

Child plays and gets along with others, is curious about the world and likes to explore, shows respect for adults and other children, able to control own behaviour, follows rules and instructions, can work independently, shows self-confidence, and is eager to play with a new toy or game.

- Take children to library storytimes to get them used to how to behave in groups and take direction. Using communal props like shakers or scarves encourages children to have respect for other's property; they can borrow an item but they will have to give it back.
- Encourage make believe play. This gives children a chance to act out real-life situations, work through worries and fears and use their imagination to solve problems.
- Encourage children to interact with each other to build a better sense of their surroundings and to promote empathy skills. Ask your local library or Parentlink centre to provide more resources about opportunities in the community for families
- Talk to your child about what's happening around him or her at any time of day. Ask him or her to describe what they are experiencing as a narrative story.
- When introducing new songs use encouraging words and praise the child's performance, clap and sing along.

Recommended Books:

- [Should I Share My Ice Cream?](#) – Mo Willems
- [This Moose Belongs to Me](#) – Oliver Jeffers
- [A Sick Day for Amos McGee](#) – Philip Stead
- [Mind Your Manners B.B. Wolf](#) – Jotto Seibold
- [Pete the Cat and his Groovy Buttons](#) – Eric Litwin

Physical Health and Well-Being:

Child is well rested and well-nourished and can sustain energy levels during kindergarten activities, is able to climb stairs, is physically independent (can look after own basic needs), has

gross motor skills (e.g. able to catch and throw a ball), has fine motor skills (able to hold a pencil or crayon), and well-coordinated (e.g., can run without bumping into or tripping over things).

- Provide the opportunity for children to colour and draw.
- Give children time to play before and after structured activities – both indoors and out.
- Provide time for children to play with and handle books in a variety of ways.
- Ask children to act out events from their books and add physical actions to your favourite stories and choose songs that have a physical component like actions or dancing.
- Ask children to hold the book while you read to them. Model turning the pages, following along the text with a finger and have children practice these skills.
- Read books that promote healthy activities like riding a bike or eating breakfast and encourage discussion of these activities.

Recommended books:

- [*It's a Tiger!*](#) - David LaRochelle and illustrated by Jeremy Tankard
- [*We're Going on a Lion Hunt*](#) - Margery Cuyler
- [*If You're Happy and You Know It*](#) - James Warhola
- [*Can you Make a Scary Face?*](#) - Jan Thomas
- [*Everyone Can Learn to Ride a Bike*](#) - Chris Raschka
- [*Growing Vegetable Soup*](#) - Lois Ehlert

Recommended songs:

- [*Zoom Zoom Zoom*](#)

Language and Thinking Skills:

Child is interested in reading and writing, is able to identify at least 10 letters of the alphabet, can count up to 20, is able to remember things easily, is able to sort and classify objects by shape, colour and size, understands simple time concepts (e.g., today, summer, bedtime).

- Sing the alphabet song with children. Try alternating between yourself and the child so they can fill in missing letters.
- Point out letters and numbers in everyday life on street signs, posters and buildings.

- Play I Spy or similar games with colours, numbers or letters.
- Ask children to predict what will happen next in a story.
- Give the child a timeline of the day's activities: "First we have breakfast, then we'll ride on the bus, then we'll visit the library." As you finish an activity, ask the child what is coming up next. Use movable pictures on a felt board or clothesline to create the routine visually. Enhance transitions with songs, rhymes or actions.
- Read a book without words. Help the child create the story.

Recommended books:

- [Square Cat](#) - Elizabeth Schoonmaker
- [Two at the Zoo](#) - Danna Smith
- [City Numbers](#) - Joanne Schwartz
- [Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?](#) - Bill Martin, Jr.
- [Alphabeasts](#) - Wallace Edwards
- [Tuesday](#) - David Wiesner

Recommended songs:

- [Five Little Monkeys](#)
- [Five Fat Peas](#)
- [Little Mouse](#)

Communication Skills and General Knowledge:

Child is able to communicate needs and wants in socially appropriate ways, can tell stories, has general knowledge about the outside world that is age appropriate.

- Have children use puppets or felt figures to create their own stories. Visit the [epl.ca Books and Other Fun Stuff](#) page for some puppet inspiration!
- Provide opportunities to select books together through library borrowing and/or purchasing. Having a variety of books in the home is essential. Empower the child in choosing materials based on his or her interests.
- Role play and model socially appropriate communication in your speech; reward children with encouragement when they are polite and communicate clearly.

- Teach children with limited verbal skills to communicate using signs or pictures.
- Pre-read books by discussing the setting or other elements from looking at the cover or illustrations.
- Ask children questions or give them each a short time to talk about their own related experiences after a book, song or story.
- Use materials including non-fiction that feature other countries, time periods or ways of life the child may not be familiar with, and follow up with questions or comments.
- Before reading, singing or storytelling, ask children what they already know about the topic.
- Create sorting activities using objects or pictures
- Encourage and model “pretending” during play

Recommended books:

- [*Beetle Bop*](#) - Denise Fleming
- [*Freight Train*](#) – Donald Crews
- [*Very Hungry Caterpillar*](#) – Eric Carle
- [*Spots, Feathers and Curly Tails*](#) - Nancy Tafuri
- [*Splash!*](#) - Flora McDonnell
- [*Meet Wild Boars*](#) – Meg Rosoff