



Learning to read *begins* before children start school. Help your children develop early literacy skills now; this makes it easier for children to learn to read once they begin school.

Five of the best ways to help your child get ready to read are:



Learn how to help your child get ready to read @ your library.

Every Child Ready to Read® is a project of the Association for Library Service to Children and the Public Library Association, divisions of the American Library Association.

[www.everychildreadytoread.org](http://www.everychildreadytoread.org)

## Preschool Milestones

**By the time a child is ready to head off to kindergarten, you can expect to see these signs of early reading readiness. A preschooler who is progressing smoothly will:**

- Speak and understand spoken language well, with a large listening vocabulary (words that are understood when listening) and an increasingly expressive speaking vocabulary (words that are used correctly when speaking).
- Enjoy looking at and listening to books.
- Participate in storytelling, playacting, simple word games, and conversation.
- Understand that print carries a message.
- Sing the alphabet song.
- Write his or her name and name the letters in it.
- Recognize half or more of the letters of the alphabet and know some of their sounds.
- Experiment with “writing” to create signs, notes, and other messages.

### Signs of Concern

**You should look for help if your four-year-old:**

- Has persistent difficulties learning to talk.
- Seems unable to follow simple directions.
- Cannot speak clearly enough to be understood by people outside the family.
- Shows little interest in reading as a pleasurable activity.
- Appears to have problems seeing or hearing.

Remember that children follow different paths to literacy. If you are concerned about your child’s hearing, speech, or development, consult your pediatrician who will be able to refer you to other sources of help.