

For the **J**oy of Learning

Learning



Saskatchewan Literacy Network



You Are Important

This booklet is for anyone who cares for and works with young children. We use the word parent to refer to any person who contributes to the development and learning of children. This may be a father, grandmother, foster parent, childcare worker, mother or others.

Children are learning from the day they are born. Children move through learning stages from babyhood to preschooler at the pace that is right for them.

You are a significant teacher for your child. We created this booklet to give you ideas to help your child enjoy learning.

Home Language

When you speak or sing your home (first) language to your child, you help her connect to your family and culture. This will help her understand the world around her. Share books with your child written in the language you first learned. By using your home language you are passing on values and traditions to the next generation.

Children enjoy learning about their families' first language.

The Many Ways of Learning and Knowing

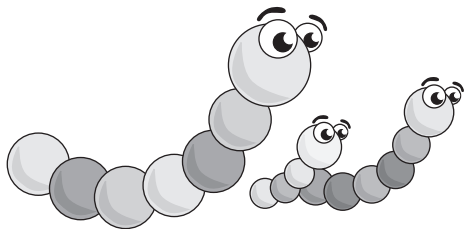
Learning is about the whole person – their mind, body, spirit and social self. Diverse cultures see learning differently. For example, some cultures like to see children work as a team while others like children to be strong on their own.

People learn best in one of these ways:

- Seeing
- Listening and talking
- Doing

By spending time with your child, you will learn which ways of learning work best for him.

Children build new learning on top of things they already know.



Learning Begins at Home

- Talk, sing and read aloud often.
- Let your child see you reading and writing.
- Provide books, paper and crayons.
- Offer your child calendars, maps, blocks and puzzles.
- Encourage your child to pretend by providing dolls, stuffed animals and dress-up clothing.
- Use movement to help your child develop strength and learn to control his body.

Children learn best from a wide variety of activities.

Young and old together

Storytelling circles, family play, singing or dance may be ways that your family celebrates traditions and culture. Being part of activities, which include the whole family, helps your child become better at communicating and learning.

Children need strong role models, both male and female.

Play

Play is the work of your child. It is a way for her to practice:

- Sharing
- Taking turns
- Following rules
- Seeing other points of view
- Solving problems
- Trying out different roles
- Using language and telling stories
- Moving in different ways
- Using imagination

Children learn from playing on their own and with others.

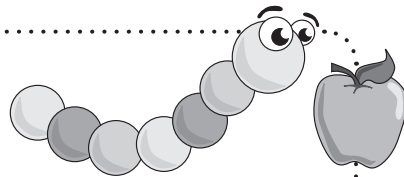
There are many ways for you and your child to play together. You may be more comfortable playing certain ways. You might ask some other adult in your child's life to play another way. For example, you may prefer being a storyteller while another person likes more active play.

Healthy Eating for Healthy Learning

Cooking or baking with your child is a great way to encourage healthy eating and learning at the same time. For example, spend time to teach him about the colours, sizes and shapes of the fruits and vegetables you feed him.

Encourage him to try new foods. When you feed your child healthy foods it gives him the energy needed to play and learn.

Healthy food helps build strong bodies and brains.



Finding Books, Puzzles, Music and Toys

You can find these in many places, such as:

- Garage sales
- The public library (your first library card is free in Saskatchewan)
- The school library
- Family and friends
- Used book stores
- Family resource centres

There are many affordable or free learning resources available.

When choosing books, puzzles, music and toys

Ask yourself:

- Will my child enjoy this book?
- Will I enjoy this book?
- Does this book have interesting pictures?
- Does this book have rhythm or rhyme which will help my child learn language?
- Do these items match my child's age and interests?
- Are these items well-made and safe for my child?

Babies

Babies learn from everything we do.

Your baby loves to be held. Talk with your baby. Ask her questions and tell her what you are doing. When she babbles, respond by answering back.

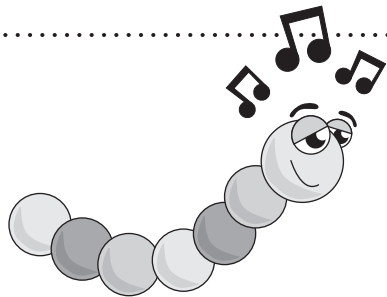
Have fun with rhymes and songs during daily routines like diaper changing and bath time.

Babies learn from all of their senses so read board or cloth books to her. Share touch-and-feel books, some have flaps, mirrors or texture. If you name the pictures as you point to them, your baby will learn new words.

Tips for learning fun:

- ☆ Let your baby have quiet time to explore her world.
- ☆ Describe the world to your baby, talk about the outdoors, what she is wearing and what you will make for dinner.
- ☆ Play with shapes, balls, blocks and puzzles.

Children learn through all their senses.



A message from your child

You help me learn and grow when:

“You sing to me.”

“You give me cuddles or kisses to make me feel safe and loved.”

“You read with me when I am relaxed and happy and stop if I lose interest.”

“You calm me with your familiar voice.”

Baby booklist

Black on White by Tana Hoban

Moo Baa La La La! by Sandra Boynton

Read Me a Book by Barbara Reid

Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes by Mem Fox

Welcome Song for Baby by Richard Van Camp

Big Fat Hen by Keith Baker

Read to Your Bunny by Rosemary Wells



Toddlers

We learn from everything we do.

Toddlers love to move, so use the rhythm of the music to dance, twirl, jump, and skip. Blow and pop bubbles here and there – blow and pop them everywhere!

Your child will like to hear stories about themselves, especially stories about what they are doing, like going shopping or stopping at the pet store.

Read throughout the day. Sometimes you will only finish a line or a page, that's okay.

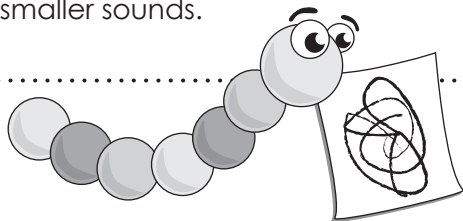
Encourage your child's scribbling. Your child can scribble a story in three pictures – the beginning, the middle and the end. Have him tell you the story while you write down the words.

Give your child his own bottom drawer and put things like wooden spoons or play-dough and toys in it. When he pulls things out, stop for a few minutes and join the fun.

Tips for learning fun:

- ☆ Throw measuring cups in the bathtub. Show your child how to pour from one cup into another.
- ☆ Print your child's name and pay special attention to the first letter. Your child may learn to recognize this letter first.
- ☆ Clap and march along with rhymes! This helps your child learn that words are made up of smaller sounds.

Good language skills help children develop in other areas.



A message from your child

You help me learn and grow when:

- “You point out store and street signs when we are on the bus or in the car.”
- “You play simple games like catch using items around the house.”
- “You display my scribbles and art work.”
- “We talk about feelings, yours and mine.”

Toddler booklist

Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr.

Bubble Trouble by Margaret Mahy

Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb by Al Perkins

Llama Llama Red Pyjama by Anna Dewdney

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear illustrated by Michael Hague

On Mother's Lap by Ann Herbert Scott

Where's Spot? by Eric Hill



Preschoolers

We learn from everything we do.

Read and reread your child's favourite book as many times as she wants. Repetition helps your child make sense of her world. She will grasp new ideas and become more ready to learn new things, like the alphabet.

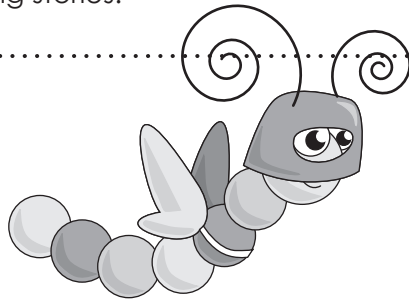
Your child is beginning to feel very independent. He will love to explore the world.

Use pails and scoops to play with sand. Discuss ideas like full and empty or heavy and light. Build castles or dig tunnels together. This will help your child learn concepts like using tools, space and opposites.

Tips for learning fun:

- ☆ Tell family and pretend stories that use lots of new words and imagination.
- ☆ Help your child draw and write or cut pictures from a magazine to make an ABC book.
- ☆ Use puppets or stuffed animals and silly voices to tell or sing stories.

Children learn by imitation.



A message from your child

You help me learn and grow when:

"You let me try printing my own name on a picture."

"You tell cultural or traditional tales to teach or entertain me."

"You show me that learning is fun by taking me to programs at the library, school or family centre."

"You understand I need time to be active and play."

Preschoolers booklist

Alphabet Rescue by Audrey Wood

How do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight? by Jane Yolen

How do you Wokka-Wokka? by Elizabeth Blunce

Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Pretty Salma: An African Tale of Red Riding Hood by Niki Daly

A Name for a Métis by Deborah Deloronde

Bigger than Daddy by Harriet Ziefert



Beginning Readers

We learn from everything we do.

Talk with your child. Look at a book like H.A. Rey's **Find the Constellations**. Go into the backyard and discuss what you see in the night sky.

Go outside and have fun! If you would like ideas, read **I Love Dirt!: 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature** by Jennifer Ward.

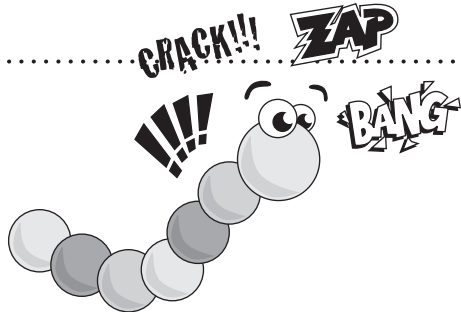
At the public library, let your child choose books, CDs, and magazines to borrow. He is ready to have his own library card.

Go to the park, do chores or go fishing together. Enjoy spending time with each other.

Nature is full of learning opportunities.

Tips for learning fun:

- ☆ Have a centre with crayons, pencils, paper, scissors and glue sticks that your child may use to be creative.
- ☆ Use magnetic letters to write a family message or words that interest your child like dinosaur or dump-truck.
- ☆ Limit TV and computer time, play family games instead.



A message from your child

You help me learn and grow when:

"We watch TV and talk about what we see."

"You tell stories about your life."

"We spend time together going to the park, using a map to plan a trip or watching sports together."

"You listen to me as I learn to read."

Beginning Readers booklist

Lots of Ladybugs: Counting by Fives by Michael Dahl

The Korean Cinderella by Shirley Climo

How the Chipmunk Got His Stripes by Joseph Bruchac

Spiders by Nic Bishop

Tyrannosaurus Math by Michelle Markel

Whoever You Are by Mem Fox

Be Glad Your Nose is on Your Face and other Poems by Jack Prelutsky



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