

Talking with Your Preschooler—Vocabulary

Activities for Families

- Songs, rhymes, and finger plays introduce children to new words in ways that are interesting, fun, and enjoyable like “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep” or songs that include movement such as “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” (labeling body parts).
- Be creative – make up your own songs and rhymes or change the words to familiar songs (such as singing, “Now It’s Time to Go to Bed” to the melody, “London Bridges Falling Down”).
- Sing along to children’s music CDs or cassette tapes in the car and at home.
- Use photos to tell favorite childhood stories about when you were a baby or young child.
- Encourage your child to use dramatic items like puppets, stuffed animals, dolls, cars, trains, planes, and props (like dress up clothes) to tell you stories or describe events that your child wants to act out (such as taking a stuffed dog to see a veterinarian).
- Encourage your child to point to, describe (color, shape, size, and so on) and label the different items (people, places, and things) in a children’s book.
- Before turning the page as you read a children’s book to your child, ask your child what she thinks will happen next.
- Ask your child to retell or act out a story that you have read to your child (for example, “The Three Little Pigs”) and provide props (like cardboard boxes for bricks) to enhance the retelling.
- Play “I Spy” with your child. Identify an item in the child’s immediate surrounding and provide clues that describe the item (such as “I spy something yellow”). Your child looks around and guesses which item you are describing.
- Place a familiar object in a bag or box (such as a sandal). Ask your child to reach in, feel, and describe the item and guess what it is.