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## **Ages and Stages of Reading Development – Kindergarten**

Your kindergartner will love looking for words, especially familiar ones. She will find them everywhere—from “sale” signs to street signs, from books to buildings. You can help your child make the connection between letters and sounds in fun ways. Try leaving a message to your child on the refrigerator or place a love note in her lunch box. Writing and reading letters and notes will reinforce the power of print in a way that has meaning to your child.

### **Milestones**

#### **Your kindergartner should:**

- Enjoy being read to and “read” familiar books alone, often by memory;
- Have some alphabet knowledge—know and be able to name the upper and lowercase letters and make the connections between these letters and the sounds they make;
- Write his own name (first and last) and some high-use words (the, mom, dad, and, I, my);
- Understand that we read English from left to right and top to bottom and be familiar with other concepts of print (print has meaning, spaces separate words, etc.);
- Enjoy using language to create stories and tell you about their day!

#### **You can try this:**

- Have conversations with your child throughout the day. Ask open-ended questions (not yes or no questions) that encourage her to discuss what she’s doing, feeling, and thinking.
- Show your child how people use reading and writing throughout the day. Ask him to help you read and follow a recipe, write a shopping list, and go through the mail with you.
- Play with letters and sounds. A good start is “Riddle, riddle, ree. I see something you don’t see. It starts with the letter B.” Let your child guess what you see, then let him find an object for you to see.
- Write a story together. You can start it and your child can fill in the blanks. For example, write, “Once upon a time there was a \_\_\_\_\_. They told their \_\_\_\_\_ they were going to look for \_\_\_\_\_.” When you’re finished, your child can illustrate the story. Seeing his own feelings and ideas in print will build his reading confidence.
- Join your local library. (Your child can help fill out her own application!) This is a wonderful way to show how reading and writing are used in everyday life. Create a special shelf or area, one your child can reach, for all the books you borrow from the library.

#### **When choosing books for your kindergartner, look for:**

- Plots that your child can relate to (friendship, going to school, family issues) and encourage your child to ask questions and explore his world;
- Language that has natural rhyme and repetition;
- Puzzles and simple games you can play together;
- Books written in your child’s native language;
- Illustrations that engage your child;
- Gold, silver, or bronze stickers that indicate the books have won awards (Coretta Scott King, Newbery, Caldecott, etc.).