



# Every Child a Talker (ECaT)

## Promoting Communication skills at home.



The Early year's foundation stage stresses the importance of

parents as a child's first and most enduring educators and that parents are best placed to teach their children good language and literacy skills. It has also been suggested that language skills learnt at home can be more significant than those learnt in an early years setting as parents teaching of these skills is more natural and based in real live situations and parents have the opportunities to be more instantly responsive and give more one to one attention to their children. Also by parents interacting with their children they are promoting their child's developing language proficiency. Parents and more able peers do this by naturally modelling, scaffolding and extending a child's speech.

Similarly parents have a major influence on their child's interest in literacy activities as

when they engage them in talking activities like reading to and telling their children stories they are encouraging an early awareness in reading and writing. Research shows the importance of parents offering their children a wide range of play based literacy activities', including songs, rhymes and opportunities to enjoy books on their developing communication and literacy skills. These are far more beneficial than commercially produced educational resources which are often aimed at learning to read and write, as although reading and writing are the eventual goal of all children research shows that one of the prerequisite to this is a positive approach to books and reading. Also having good oral skills is crucial for literacy learning. As if a child is unable to use or comprehend speech it will be more difficult for them to learn to read and write.

As parents you can easily promote oral skills and therefore other literacy skills by being aware of the following:

- The positive influence of discussing books and storytelling on your child's thinking and literacy skills.
- The importance of singing nursery rhymes and playing word games like I spy on a child's developing phonological knowledge.
- Sharing nursery rhymes with your child encourages an awareness of onset and rimes in words which is beneficial to your child when learning to read.
- We invite you to 'Stay and Play' session at a pre-school and witness the importance of play on communication and literacy skills.
- If you are not confident about singing you can share stories and nursery rhymes on compact disks, audio tapes and story sacks.
- For parents who have English as an additional language bilingual song and story tapes can be rented from treats the toy library(for details see resources)



Attached are some recommendations and resources. These are not an entirety of the materials and strategies available for promoting children's literacy skills. There are many more available and this selection may offer just a starting point for further investigation.



## Recommendations

- **Written Information** – We have leaflets and other printed resources regarding the importance of verbally interacting with your children, reading to and telling them stories and how this links with developing reading and writing skills. This information will help you to understand the stages of development their child will progress through and how they can support them. Please find examples of these in the resource list below.
- **Literacy resources available in different formats**- Nursery rhymes and stories are available on compact disks, audio tapes, CD- ROMs and websites on the internet. The internet also has some good quality sites with literacy based educational games aimed at pre-school children. BBC's CBeebies is a good for example. On the other hand there are also some websites of poor quality so please be aware of this.
- **Free resources – Join the Local Library**-Take your child to join the local library. There you can borrow audio stories as well as books.
- **Bookstart resources**.- available from your health visitor.
- **Toy Libraries**- They have a large variety of play activities which will stimulate interaction with children. Plus there are bilingual story books and multilingual compact disks and computer software which may be helpful for parents with EAL. See details of Treats Toy library below
- **Story Sacks**- These are a fun way of sharing books with their children. As well as a story and often non-fiction books they can also include an audio tape plus scenery and puppets of the main characters from the story. These act as additional mediums for telling the story which is particularly helpful for some parents. These are available to borrow from toy libraries.

- **'Stay and Play' Sessions-** Stay for a session or part of a session and witness/ participate in routine daily activities which promote literacy development(sign up on the list on the parent's notice board.

## **Resources**

### **Written Information**

#### ***The Learning Together Series***

This series of leaflets aim to help parents understand children's development and how they can support this. There are two literacy based informing parents of the stages of learning to read and write, emphasising the importance of the prerequisite skills needed for these.

***The road to reading*** by Jill Harker

***Making their mark- children's early writing*** by Penny Tassoni

These are available free of charge from

<https://www.early-education.org.uk/downloadable-resources>

### **Audio Resources**

**Compact Disk Nursery Rhyme Collections-** There is a large selection of these from various retailers or to borrow at the library. Here are a few suggestions

*Pudding & Pie Favourite Nursery Rhymes (Book and CD)* by Sarah Williams

and Ian Beck *The Wheels on the Bus (pre-school songs)* by various artists.

*Oranges and Lemons* (Book and CD). Action songs for children by Karen King and Ian Beck

**Audio Story Books** – Again there are a large selection of these from various retailers or to borrow at the library. Here are a few suggestions

*Story Time First Tales for Sharing* (Book and CD). A collection of traditional tales by Jim Broadbent and Anne Wilson

*The Mog Collection.* ( Books and CD) by Judith Kerr

*Were going on a Bear Hunt* (Book and CD) by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury

BBC Audio Have a range of nursery rhymes and pre-school story books which are downloadable to listen to on the computer, MP3 players and iPods

Available from <http://www.audible.co.uk>

### **Free Resources**

**Public libraries** all have a children's section with books, audio books and DVDs to borrow (small charge for audio tapes & DVD's ) Many also have free story times and often have holiday activities.

**Book Start** is an initiative to encourage parents to read and share books with their children. Book start packs are given to parents when their child is between seven and nine months and a second pack is given out at their preschool setting once the term before they start school.

<http://www.bookstart.org.uk/> This website provides parents, carers and professionals with information regarding the distribution of the packs, activities to do with children, current news including research, events happening in their area and a range of other resources to help them enjoy sharing books with children.

### **Toy Libraries**

**Treats Toy Library** has over three thousand toys and resources available for rent at a small charge. These include many play activities which will stimulate interact with children plus bilingual story books and multilingual compact disks and computer software. Membership is open to individuals and groups.

Information, application forms and catalogues available from  
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=384963>

### **Bilingual, Multilingual multicultural and Inclusive Resources**

**Mantra Lingua** supplies bilingual multicultural resources including toys, books, audio disks, posters and computer software. Catalogue available from:

<http://www.mantralingua.com/home.php>

**Letterbox library**- a non-profit making organization that specializes in multicultural and inclusive books. Catalogue available at

<http://www.letterboxlibrary.com/acatalog/index.html>

## **Story Sacks**

Treats Toy library – has a selection of story sacks to rent

## **Web sites**

**<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk>**

This is the web site of the National literacy Trust which is a charity whose aim is to promote literacy skills in children and adults who have limited skills. The site has a wide range of information from research to resources to support this. The information is for parents of all aged children, adults and professionals.

**<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby/index.html>**

Information on this site is for parents and those who care for children aged from birth to three years old. Its aim is to encourage them to talk to their children. It has a wide range of information including the latest research and initiatives in this area, details of events and an extensive selection of downloadable resources.

Top tips – advice sheets for parents/carers available in thirteen different languages

**[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)** –

Excellent articles and resources-. The Learning to talk, Talking to learn DVD is brilliant and comes with two free posters: Top techniques to develop children's speech and language & Stages of speech and language development – (These are downloadable from the resources section). Chatter Matters DVD – Great resource for working with parents.

**[www.early-education.org.uk/downloadable-resources](http://www.early-education.org.uk/downloadable-resources)**

A variety of information including a set of leaflets to help parents of children from 0-5.

**<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/eyfs/>**

This BBC web site has activities for parents to help support their child's developing literacy skills. The site also has links to on line literacy games and activities plus literacy based television shows for children.

**[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121015000000/http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/HelpingYourChildToLearn/DG\\_10017051](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121015000000/http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Preschooldevelopmentandlearning/HelpingYourChildToLearn/DG_10017051)**

This site has simple tips and activities regarding how parents can promote reading and writing with under five year olds.

**<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/>**

Here parents can find list of good quality books to read to their children.

