

HOW DO I HELP MY CHILD WITH... LEARNING SOUNDS



WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Knowing letter sounds is crucial for reading and spelling success. Without knowing letter sounds automatically, children will struggle in all areas of reading.

WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG?

You may find yourself feeling frustrated because it is taking so long to learn sounds: trust me, I know it can feel defeating. But did you know that it takes hundreds of exposures to a letter before the sound sticks? Some children may pick up on it quickly, but it is not out of the ordinary for it to take many, many exposures before your child remembers their sounds.

B DOES NOT SAY BUH!

When we discuss letter sounds, it can be natural to say things like b says "buh" and t says "tuh." The truth is, though, that saying "uh" with a sound is actually adding an additional sound. Try to "clip" your sounds--pay attention that when you are speaking, you're not adding the "uh" sound to the end!

WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO?

Tips for learning letter sounds:

1. Teach the name and the sound at the same time--they do not have to know all of their letter names before they learn their sounds. For example, teach children that the name is t and the sound it represents is /t/.
2. Practice multiple times in the day, but in short chunks. You can keep letters on the refrigerator and point out a few letters multiple times a day. (Think 1 minute!)
3. Play games! There are so many prepackaged games out there, but you can also easily make your own. I take blank notecards and write letters on them. I put them facedown and ask my daughter to find matching pairs.
4. Teach proper letter formation from the start. Use lined paper that has a dotted midline. The smaller the lines, the harder it is to form the letters.