

Parent-Family Tips-Talking and Listening

Talking and listening affect children's school success. It's through hearing parents and family members talk and through responding to that talk that young children begin to pick up the language skills they need to do well.

- Find time to talk. Talk about what is going on in school or in life. Ask your child about what is being learned in class and to share something about his/her favorite part of the day. Point out and talk about things that you see as you travel such as signs, cars, and interesting people or places.
- As you shop in a store, talk with your child about prices, differences in brands, and how to make good quality selections.
- As you fix meals, ask your child to help you follow the steps in a recipe. Talk with your child about what can happen if you miss a step or leave out an ingredient.
- As you complete work at home, talk with your child about each step you take to complete the work. Tell your child what you're doing and why you're doing it. Ask her/him for suggestions about how you should do something.
- As you watch TV together, talk with your child about the programs. If you're watching one of your child's favorite programs, encourage sharing about the background of the characters, which one is liked or disliked, and who the actors are. Compare the program to a program that you liked when you were your child's age.
- As you read a book with your child, pause occasionally to talk about what's happening in the book. Relate the events in the book to events in real life with statements such as, "Look at that tall building! Didn't we see that when we were in Chicago?" Ask your child to retell what the book was about. Help your child with new words in a book and in defining what they mean.
- Be a good listener. It's also important for you to show your child that you're listening to him/her and have an interest in what is being said. When you model what good listening looks like, children learn to be good listeners as well.