

Suggestions from the Parent and Community Resource Coalition

Lakewood Memorial Library

Let's Learn About the ABCs

What is it?

Eventually young readers learn to use the sounds of letters and letter combinations to figure out words. Before that, however, children need to learn their ABCs and learn to recognize individual letters in print. Here are some activities for toddlers and preschoolers. Use short, 5-minute sessions. Make it like a game. Have fun!

Recognizing the ABCs

Sing the alphabet song. Look online (search for "ABC songs for kids") for other versions. Sing the song to your child. Invite your child to sing with you. Then sing the first part of the song, pause, and invite your child to name the next letter. (For example, you sing "A, B, C, D," pause, and your child sings "E.")

Read alphabet books. The library has a list in the notebook called "Let's Read About." After you have read each book, return to a few pages. Start with easy consonants, such as B, D, F, M, and P. As you read each page, ask your child to locate some items that start with the letter. (For example, on the B page: Where is the boy? Where is the bear? Where is the bat?)

Look in the children's area of the library for the "Let's Learn About" box about the alphabet. In it you will find alphabet toys and books, along with a sheet describing activities.

Use index cards to make a deck of upper and lower case letters. With these you can

- give your child the cards that make his or her name. Ask your child to make his or her name. Later, provide all the capital letters and ask your child to find the letters for his/ her name and to make the name.

- give several sets of upper and lower case letters to your child. Ask him or her to make sets (for example, N and n).

- give your child the capitals of a few familiar letters. Ask your child to find the corresponding lower case letters. [and vice versa]

- play Concentration or Match with sets of upper and lower case cards. Select 4 sets and place them face down on the table. Ask your child to flip a card and try to find its match. If a match is made, your child takes the cards. If not, the cards are flipped down again and play resumes.

- play Go Fish. Deal 6 cards to your child and yourself. Put the rest face down in the middle of the table. Your child can ask, "Do you have [some letter]?" from his/ her hand. If you do, give the letter, and your child can put the pair on the table. If not say "Go Fish," and your child selects a card from the face down pile. Then you take a turn. Play continues until someone has put all their cards on the table.

Go on a letter hunt using junk mail or newspaper inserts. (Choose something with big capital letters.) Give your child a crayon or sharpie and ask him/ her to find and circle a few familiar letters.

Use bubble wrap with large bubbles. Use a sharpie to write several familiar letters, several times each, on the bubbles. Ask your child to look for all the [letters] and to pop the corresponding bubbles.