

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Ready to Read: An Early Literacy Home Program
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Long before children read words on a page, they build the hidden skills that make reading possible — hearing the sounds in words, enjoying rhymes, recognising letters, and loving stories. This program helps you grow those skills at home through everyday play and shared books, with no worksheets or pressure.

These gentle activities support your child's reading journey but do not replace a proper assessment. Children develop at different rates, and if you have concerns about your child's speech, language or learning, do speak to a professional as well.

♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Parents of toddlers and preschoolers getting ready for reading
- ✓ Families who want simple, playful ways to build early literacy
- ✓ Children who love stories and are curious about letters
- ✓ Parents wanting to support learning before or alongside school
- ✓ Anyone who wants to make books a happy part of everyday life

⚡ Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

Persistent difficulty with sounds and letters despite lots of gentle support
— this can be an early sign of dyslexia

Loss of skills your child had previously gained

A family history of reading difficulty together with your child struggling

Little interest in stories, rhymes or spoken language compared with other children

Ongoing trouble hearing or telling apart similar sounds

☆ Your step-by-step roadmap

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

Week 1 – Fall in love with books

Make sharing stories the best part of the day.

Read together every day, even for just a few minutes, and let your child pick the book.

Point to pictures and talk about what is happening rather than only reading the words.

Read favourites again and again — repetition helps children learn language and story patterns.

⚡ **Try this:** Use funny voices and pause at exciting bits to keep your child hooked.

Week 2 – Play with rhyme and sound

Help your child hear the music in words.

Sing nursery rhymes and songs, letting your child fill in the rhyming word.

Play “which words rhyme?” with simple pairs like cat and hat.

Clap out the beats in names and words — “ba-na-na” — to hear the chunks in words.

⚡ **Try this:** Make up silly rhymes together — the sillier the better for keeping it fun.

Week 3 – Hearing the first sounds

Tune your child's ear to individual sounds.

Play “I spy something beginning with s” using the sound, not the letter name.

Say a word slowly and let your child guess it — “c – a – t” — like a fun robot game.

Point out words that start with the same sound, such as “mummy” and “milk”.

 **Try** Sound out the first letter of your child's name and hunt for other things
this: that start the same.

Week 4 – Meeting letters

Link sounds to the letters that make them.

Introduce a few letters at a time, saying the sound the letter makes.

Spot letters everywhere — on signs, packets and doors — turning it into a game.

Trace letters in sand, paint or with a finger to link the shape with the sound.

 **Try** Start with the letters in your child's own name — they matter most
this: to them.

Week 5 – Blending into first words

Bring sounds together to read simple words.

Practise blending short, simple words made of sounds your child knows, like “sat” or “pin”.

Keep books close by and let your child “read” the pictures and join in with familiar lines.

Praise every attempt warmly, so reading always feels like a happy, safe thing to try.

 **Try** Point to each sound as you blend it, then sweep your finger to say the whole word.

Tricks that make it work

- ✓ Keep it playful — five happy minutes beats twenty forced ones.
- ✓ Follow your child’s interests when choosing books and topics.
- ✓ Let your child see you reading and enjoying books yourself.
- ✓ Talk with your child all day long, as rich conversation builds the words behind reading.
- ✓ Teach letter sounds (“sss”) before letter names, as sounds are what reading uses first.
- ✓ Never turn reading into a test — keep it about sharing and enjoyment.

How you’ll know it’s working

- Your child joins in with rhymes and spots words that rhyme
- Your child hears and says the first sound in words
- Your child recognises and names some letter sounds
- Your child chooses books and enjoys sharing stories



Is this based on real methods? This program is built on phonological awareness — hearing and playing with sounds — together with shared reading and structured, systematic phonics, which are widely recognised as the building blocks of learning to read.