

# LEARNING HOW TO DO BOOK-SHARING

Stimulating your child's development helps them grow and helps you grow closer to them. It is easy and fun and you can make a big difference in their lives by doing a simple activity called "book-sharing" for just 5 minutes each day.

## Child development and early stimulation

- Children's brains develop at a faster rate in the first few years of their lives. From the moment your baby is born, the amount of stimulation they get affects how well their brain develops.
- It is important that your baby has secure and supportive relationships with the most important adults in their lives as this affects how well they develop in these early months and years.
- Development in the early years (specifically between birth and 5 years old which is called the "Early Childhood Development" period) sets the foundation for their future growth and success.
- Even if they cannot do or say much, they are developing very quickly.
- You can help maximise your child's development by creating a loving, nurturing and stimulating environment for them.
- One way to do this is to do a simple and enjoyable activity with your child for only a few minutes every day – this activity is called "book-sharing."



## Wordless books and book-sharing

For babies between the ages of 9 and 18 months, there are four key areas of development that are supported by early sensitive book-sharing.

- **Attention:** By focusing on pictures that babies are interested in, babies develop their capacity for sustained and focused attention.
- **Language:** By listening to an adult name and talk about the things that they find interesting, the number of words babies understand increases a lot. By responding to your questions about the book (even if baby isn't using words), the number of words babies can understand and say also increases. Your child's understanding and language will also develop quickly if you support your child's comments on the pictures in the book, build on them and link them to the child's own experience,
- **Security:** When baby shares a book with you and you are sensitive and supportive and follow your child's ideas, your child feels emotionally supported, and this builds a deep closeness with you.
- **Emotional understanding:** When baby learns the names of different emotions and how they are used to describe the feelings of different characters in the book, they start to better understand emotions.

# USE THESE BOOK-SHARING SKILLS TO STIMULATE YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT

Try to do book-sharing every day for just 5 minutes. Doing it every day helps babies learn something new each day. Always be positive and don't say to "no, you are wrong."



## Skill 1: Enjoy the book with your child

Help your baby enjoy the book by allowing them to have freedom with the book. Do not be too worried at the beginning about what they do with the book. Help them hold the book and show them that they can have fun with the book.

## Skill 2: Follow your child's interest

Look at, listen to and watch what your baby is doing. At this young age, children learn best when parents or caregivers are sensitive towards them. When you pay attention to what your child is interested in, your child will enjoy the experience more and will be able to pay attention for a longer time.

## Skill 3: Always be positive

Respond positively to any contribution that your baby makes - this encourages them and makes it fun for them. Saying "no, you are wrong" discourages them. Whatever contribution they make, a sound or pointing, even if they are wrong, say something positive.



## Skill 4: Pointing and naming

If your baby cannot speak yet, point to something in the book (a thing or an action) and name it. When you point and name objects and actions in the book that have attracted your baby's attention, your baby will learn to understand more words. Repeat the same words many times to help baby learn the new word.

## Skill 5: Asking 'wh' question (who, what, where)

If you think that your baby might know a word already, but cannot say it yet, ask the baby "wh" questions. For example: "Where is the banana?", "Can you show me where the ball is?"

## Skill 6: Praise and repeat



When a child makes a contribution, either by saying something, making a sound, or pointing, praise them for what they have done. Encourage them and congratulate them for doing well. You can also repeat what they have said, for example, if they say "Ba" for bus, you can say "Yes, that's right, it's a bus".

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## Skill 7: Elaborating

Say at least one extra thing to build on what the child has shown an interest in or responded to. By elaborating on the object or action that your baby is already interested in, you can improve your baby's understanding. For example, if the baby is pointing to an umbrella, you can say "Yes, it's an umbrella. It's a big red umbrella that gives the people shade."

## Skill 8: Making links

Connect what your baby sees in the book to objects or actions that happen around them. By making links between the pictures and baby's own experience, your child's understanding of the world grows. For example, "Look, do you see that the baby in the book is playing with a blue ball, just like your blue ball at home."

## Skill 9: Talking about feelings

Talking to babies about feelings helps them make sense of their own feelings, helps them explore their own feelings and helps them to develop a better understanding of the feelings of others. It is an important part of children's development for them to start to understand feelings. Talk to babies about what different characters feel in the book by pointing and naming the feeling, and talking about why the character might feel that way.



## CHECKLIST

- Are you helping your baby have fun with the book?
- Are you sitting comfortably with your baby?
- Are you following your baby's lead?
- Are you being positive and praising?
- Are you pointing, naming and repeating?
- Are you making book-sharing fun for your baby?
- Are you pointing and naming or asking "wh" questions?
- Are you asking interesting and stimulating questions?
- Are you elaborating or making links?
- Are you talking about feelings?



## REMEMBER

You can start book-sharing from the time your child is 10 months old already. Even if they can't speak, this will help them develop language well

You can do book-sharing in any language