

Early Talk = School Readiness

Infants

Back-and-forth interactions help prepare young minds for future success at school. Help your child make friends, solve problems, and enjoy learning in kindergarten — by talking with them now!



Language skills help young children tell someone what they think, want, or need.

At school, these skills support:

- Communication: Playing with friends, listening to and understanding stories.
- Reading: Identifying letter sounds, understanding that sounds combine to make words.

Build their skills:

Talk about what you're doing throughout the day.

"I am cutting apples for my lunch. I use a knife to chop, chop, chop."

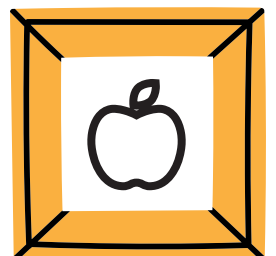


Sing songs and use hand motions.

"If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands..."

Point to objects as you name them.

"Where is your nose? Here it is! This is your nose."



Executive functioning skills are the “thinking” skills that help young children navigate their world.

At school, these skills support:

- Focus: Paying attention, completing an activity, following directions.
- Memory: Remembering information and instructions, connecting ideas.
- Self-control: Waiting turns, solving problems, adapting to routines.

Build their skills:

Engage in back-and-forth play.

“Here comes the ball! Now it’s your turn to roll it back.”

Find objects together.

“I see a cat! Where is the cat?”

Play hide-and-seek games.

“Is the bear under the blanket? There he is... peek-a-boo!”



Social-emotional skills help young children understand who they are and appropriately express what they feel.

At school, these skills support:

- Self-regulation: Managing emotions, understanding how others feel.
- Relationships: Making friends, cooperating, working in a team.



Build their skills:

Watch for and respond positively to needs or actions.

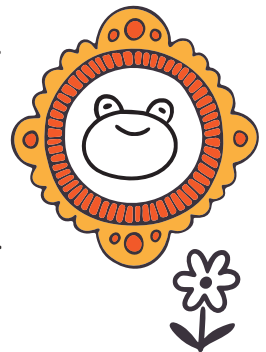
“You look sad. Let me give you a cuddle until you feel better.”

Talk about your emotions and name your feelings.

“I am excited today because we are going to the zoo!”

Model healthy emotional expressions and positive behaviors.

“I feel upset! I will take some deep breaths to calm down.”



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It's never too early (or too late) to help your child start school stronger! For more fun ways to build brains with early talk, visit [LENA.org/resources](https://lena.org/resources).