



Issue Ten

# Supporting Early Learners

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## Dear Parents,

Children have the best possible chance to reach their full potential when educators and parents work as partners to provide supportive learning environments. These newsletters have been written by Bev DeMonyé and Gloria Gustafson for parents wanting to help their children at home. You are welcome to email us at [learningtoread@telus.net](mailto:learningtoread@telus.net) or visit our website [www.readwritewithkids.com](http://www.readwritewithkids.com) to view other resources.

## The ABC's of Preventing the Summer Slide

**A** is for **alphabet**. Children love to create a personal alphabet book using photographs and magazine pictures. Words or short sentences to go with the pictures can be added.

**B** is for **bedtime**. Establish bedtime routines to help the day end on a pleasant note. Consider letting your child keep their light on for an extra 10 minutes provided they are looking at books.

**C** is for **connections**. Encourage your child to make connections between what they are reading and their own lives by asking questions such as: *What does this remind you of?*

**D** is for **decoding** or figuring out words. Children recognize words from memory, sounding out or phonics, and using clues from pictures, diagrams and other words on the page.

**E** is for **eating** healthy foods. Talk to your child about healthy food. Children learn about nutrition when they are involved in the planning and preparing of meals and snacks.

**F** is for **feelings**. Children can learn about being sad, tired, excited, angry, content, happy, surprised, irritated and afraid through the characters in books who experience these same feelings.

**G** is for **games** and puzzles. What better way to promote the oral language skills of listening and speaking and the learning skills of perseverance and dealing with a task that is a bit difficult. Children also learn the social skills of taking turns and being able to cope with not always winning.

**H** is for **helping**. Use the *I Do, We Do, You Do* learning formula. Show children how to do something, do it with them and then provide lots of practice opportunities for them to do it on their own.

**I** is for **interactive reading**. Conversations before, during and after reading help young children interact and make sense of what they are reading or hearing. This works for screen time as well.

**J** is for **juggling** time. Include children in decisions about daily routines so they learn how to prioritize time and create a balance between work and play.

**K** is for **knowledge**. Help children connect new knowledge to what they already know or have experienced.

**L** is for **labelling**. When children are drawing they can be encouraged to tell you words to add as labels for their pictures. Parents or children can do the printing.

**M** is for **measuring**. Have fun with measuring tapes, calendars, clocks, timers, scales, thermometers, odometers, pedometers and coins so children learn through real life experiences how to measure. Cooking and baking provide wonderful opportunities to learn about measuring!

**N** is for **numeracy**. Real life materials and situations help children understand numeracy words: more, less, some, longer, heavier, lighter, taller, shorter, same, equal, add, subtract, take away.

**O** is for **oral language**. We learn and share information through speaking and listening throughout our lives. Helping children become respectful speakers and listeners are important life-long skills.

**P** is for **practice**. To become confident and competent with any skill requires lots of practice.

**Q** is for a **questioning** mind. Prompts such as: *I wonder why? How does that work? and Can you tell me?* encourage children to develop a sense of curiosity about the world around them.

**R** is for **reading**. Children need to be read to, supported to read books they are struggling with and lots of opportunities to read on their own.

**S** is for **spelling**. Nothing improves spelling more than reading because each time children see words spelled correctly it reinforces correct spelling.

**T** is for **talking**. Speaking skills can be encouraged by using prompts such as: *Tell me more about that. Can you explain that? What else can you tell me about that?*

**U** is for **unique**. Each child's learning journey is unique. Children learn at different rates and in different ways.

**V** is for **visiting**. Explore what is available in your community for optional learning experiences.

**W** is for **writing**. Postcards, emails, journals, travel notes, shopping lists, party planning, family messages, thank you notes, schedules of chores, photo albums with labels or anecdotes are fun ways to demonstrate that writing has a purpose and is enjoyable.

**X** is for **eXercise**. Exercise is vital for good brain and body functioning.

**Y** is for **you and helping out**. Contributing to the chores of family life helps children develop self-worth, self confidence and self-esteem.

**Z** is for **z-z-z-z**. Children require different amounts of sleep. Make sure your child gets enough. No one functions well when tired!