

Tip Sheet: Promote Print Awareness Through Storybook Reading

FOR PRESCHOOL PARENTS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTPrintAware> to view a short video.

WHY?

Understanding that printed words carry meaning gives children a genuine purpose to read: They want to understand that printed message! Developing print awareness is an important step in learning how to read. Sharing a book with your child is the perfect opportunity to draw their attention to how print works.

WHAT?

Children begin to develop **print awareness** when they understand that letters represent spoken sound. Print awareness is their understanding of what print is and how we use it.

Children with print awareness, understand that:

- Print has different purposes, such as labeling items, giving instructions, alerting to a warning, or telling a story.
- Print always goes in a certain direction. In English, text is written from left to right and top to bottom. This is called the directionality of print.
- Letters work together make words.
- Spaces separate printed words.
- There are special signals in print, such as capital letters and punctuation marks, to help readers understand the printed message.

Print awareness helps children understand how books work. This includes knowledge about:

- The parts of a book, such as the front and back cover, spine, title, title page, and page numbers.
- The roles of the author and the illustrator in the creation of a book.

HOW?

Sharing a read aloud is the perfect opportunity to show your child how print works. While reading, you can:

- Talk about the parts of the book.
- Talk about the author and illustrator.
- Track your finger under the text as you read to show directionality. Have your child show you where you should read next.
- Ask your child to find a particular letter that they are familiar with on the page, such as "s." Remind them of the sound that letter makes and then read the word that has that letter.
- Challenge your child to find the longest or shortest words on the page. Read those words aloud. Counting the number of letters in the words helps your child notice the different lengths.