



Did You Know?

When babies are born, their **brains are not finished**. They have all the parts they need, but the different areas that help them think and learn aren't "hooked up" together yet.

From birth to age 3, a child's brain is busy making connections between the millions of brain cells they were born with. These help children make sense of the world and learn to talk, read and write later on.

You can make a difference in how your child's brain develops during this important time—and give him or her a strong beginning in school, work and life.

Every time you talk or read together, thousands of healthy, new brain connections are created. They grow even more when kids are cuddled and cared for by people they trust.

By doing simple things when kids are young, you can give them the power to read, learn, dream and succeed throughout life.

You can give your child **Word Power!**



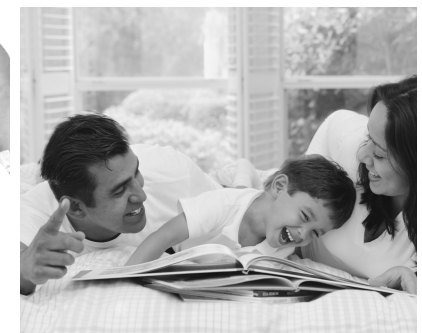
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You Can Give Your Child

WORD



POWER



Babies, Toddlers & Preschoolers

Word Power

The Power to Read • Learn • Dream • Succeed

It's As Easy As 1-2-3!

1 Words & Sounds

Children who hear and understand many words before they start school become better readers.

- Talk to your child about things you see, do, think and feel.
- When your child talks to you, repeat what was said, speaking clearly. Add more words and ideas.
- Read together every day. Talk about the pictures so your child hears and learns more words.
- Ask your child questions. Make eye contact. Listen patiently to the answer and respond.
- Play with sounds in words. Make silly rhymes and sing songs. Find things that begin and end with different sounds.

2 Fun With Books

Kids who enjoy books will want to learn how to read.

- Visit the library often to borrow colorful, interesting books.
- Show your child how to hold a book and turn the pages. Follow words with your finger as you read.
- Make book-sharing a special time for closeness between you and your child. If he or she loses interest, stop and do something else.



THREE THINGS
CHILDREN NEED
BEFORE SCHOOL
TO BECOME
GOOD READERS

3 Letters Everywhere

Knowing names and sounds of letters helps children learn to say written words.

- Point out and name letters of the alphabet that you see throughout the day. On cereal boxes, signs, toys, books and in stores—they're all around us.
- Write your child's name, and other words that interest him or her (like "truck" or "dog").
- Speak slowly, so your child can hear the smaller letter sounds that we put together to create words.
- Sing and say the alphabet song with your child, saying each letter separately (especially l-m-n-o-p).
- Point to letters and words as you say their names or the sound they make.
- Teach your child to hold a pencil and use it to scribble and draw shapes and pictures. Older kids can begin to copy or write their own name.