**Helping Children to Develop Literacy Skills**

**Other Components of Literacy**

There are ways to help children develop literacy skills. Literacy is generally defined as being able to read, write, communicate. There are more deeper levels of literacy that are just as important.

Establishing predictable routines to help children learn to anticipate events. With routines, children can begin to learn about objects and vocabulary associated with certain activities. Participating in all steps of a routine can reinforce concepts and language skills. Routines can also help children learn about a sequence – first this, then this or start to finish. Examples would be setting a table, laying out clothes or arranging materials for any activity.

Children who are visually impaired or blind also need the opportunity to experience things through hands-on activities. They would need more instruction because of lack of learning through incidental learning. A book about a farm will be more meaningful if one can visit an actual farm, pet different animals, listen to their calls, etc.

Using a wide range of vocabulary and concepts are important to have good literacy skills. Using lots of adjectives and more detailed descriptions can help expand a child’s vocabulary. Examples would be “let’s put on your red rubber boots today” or “get the blue pitcher of cold milk”.

Many children benefit from reading aloud. It can give them special attention, reinforce language development and to work on book handling skills. Things that will reinforce the experience to be pleasant and meaningful for a young child are:

 -The book should be fun for both the adult and child.

 -The book should relate to the child’s own experiences.

 -Read at a pace that is appropriate to the child.

 -Provide props if you can to supplement illustrations.

-Modify the book to meet a child’s individual’s needs and interests. You can do anything to enhance the child’s experience.

Include the child in the process of reading and writing lists, letters, directions, etc. Have a child help you think of what you need on a grocery list, look in the cupboards, refrigerator and see what is needed. Have them help you write the list.

The more parents can show and teach their children about reading and vocabulary by doing the things listed above, the more interested that child will be in continuing to read and learn and do these things on their own which will further help in their development.

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