Smart Ways to Talk with Young Children

Giving your child many opportunities to talk helps them build a large vocabulary and increases their ability to describe events and tell stories. The following suggestions can help your child develop important literacy skills.

Build Vocabulary

- Read and talk about books that include facts about things that interest your child.
- Ask your child to practice saying a new word aloud.

Build Sentence Skills

- Ask open-ended questions. For example questions that begin with: "What's going on....?" "What do you call that...?" or "Why do you think...?"
- Follow your child's answer with another question. For example: "What else do you see?" or "I wonder how..."
- Expand upon what your child says. Add another piece of information. For example: "Yes, the sirens are noisy. They have to be loud. Why do you think they should be loud?"

Storytelling Starters (from PLA/ALSC's Every Child Ready to Read @ your library)

- For infants and toddlers, start with silly sounds. Children delight in mimicking the sounds you make. This is just the beginning of having conversations with your child.
- Tell your child how you felt the day he or she was born.
- Tell a story about your childhood. Children have a great interest in hearing about experiences their parents had at a similar age.
- Use simple props such as a puppet or a stuffed animal to tell a story. Use silly voices for different characters and ask your child to join in.
- Use family photos to tell different stories.

Attachment	Size
Stages in Learning Vocabulary.pdf [1]	129.59 KB
Fun with Words-Telling Stories.pdf [2]	124.56 KB

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