

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

## What to look for

## Your child...

- ✓ Can speak in complete sentences
- ✓ Can follow directions with at least two steps
- ✓ Can understand words such as 'top' and 'bottom', 'big' and 'little'
- ✓ Can follow directions in a simple game with other children or adults.
- ✓ Can say or sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes
- ✓ Can recognize when words rhyme, such as 'cat' and 'hat'

## To encourage your child's language development:

- ★ Take time each day to listen to and talk with your child. Some good times for conversation are while traveling, at mealtimes and at bedtime.
- ★ Encourage your child to listen and use language to express ideas.
- ★ Involve your child in activities and games that require listening and following directions.
- ★ Read and tell stories that have interesting characters and easy-to-follow plots. Talk with your child about the stories after you read or tell them.
- ★ Read and sing nursery rhymes and rhyming stories with your child.

## BEGINNING READING

### What to look for

#### Your child...

- ✓ Can make simple predictions and comments about a story being read
- ✓ Can tell a simple story back to you after listening to it
- ✓ Knows the letters in his or her own first name, and can recognize his or her own first name in print
- ✓ Can recognize words or signs he or she sees often (local restaurants and stores, street signs)
- ✓ Can hold and look at books right side up, turning the pages one at a time from front to back
- ✓ Knows and names at least 10 letters of the alphabet
- ✓ Can match a letter with the beginning sound of a word (such as the letter 'B' with a picture of a banana)

#### To encourage your child's beginning reading skills:

- ★ Set aside a special time each day to read with your child. Read your child's favorite books and rhymes over and over. Read some of your favorites from childhood, too. Talk with your child about the story and the characters.
- ★ Involve your child in putting pictures in order. You can use photos of your child at different ages, or pictures cut from a magazine.
- ★ Get a set of letter magnets, and put them on the refrigerator or a cookie sheet for your child to play with.
- ★ Make a name card for your child. Display the name card in a special place, and talk to your child about the names of the letters.
- ★ Using pictures from a magazine or real objects, and magnetic letters, help your child match pictures to their beginning sound.

## NUMBERS AND COUNTING

### What to look for

#### Your child...

- ✓ Can count at least 5 objects
- ✓ Knows that the written numeral '3' means 3 objects, such as 3 bears
- ✓ Can add and subtract small numbers of familiar objects, such as, "I have 3 cookies. You have 2. How many do we have all together?"
- ✓ Can put written numbers in order from 1 to 5
- ✓ Can count from 1 to 10 in the correct order
- ✓ Can use the words 'more' and 'less' correctly

#### To encourage your child's skills with counting and numbers:

- ★ Collect a variety of materials your child can use for counting and learning about numbers. Old keys, plastic bottle caps, thread spools, and pictures from magazines all work well.
- ★ Use materials from around the house to experiment with addition, subtraction and "more" and "less" activities.
- ★ Use number words, point out numbers, and involve your child in counting activities as you go through your day.
- ★ Read, tell stories, sing songs, and say poems about numbers and counting with your child. Try to include books in which characters are added or subtracted as the story progresses. (Good books include: *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, by Eileen Christelow and *Roll Over! A Counting Song* by Merle Peek.)

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### What to look for

#### Your child...

- ✓ Can say if he or she is a boy or girl
- ✓ Can tell first and last name and names of parents
- ✓ Can say how old he or she is
- ✓ Takes care of own needs, such as toileting, washing hands and dressing
- ✓ Adjusts to new situations without parent being there

#### To encourage your child's social and emotional development:

- ★ Create with your child an "All About Me and My Family" book. Staple or tie a few sheets of paper together to make the book. Involve your child in adding personal information, such as first and last name, parents' names, child's gender, age, address, likes and dislikes. Your child can make a cover and decorate the book.
- ★ Support and celebrate your child's independence. Give lots of praise for things that your child has learned to do on his or her own, such as brushing teeth, washing hands, putting on shoes, zipping jacket, riding a tricycle, and buttoning shirt.
- ★ Help your child be prepared for going to kindergarten. With your child, pretend to go to school and practice how you will say goodbye. Visit the new school to meet the kindergarten teacher and explore the classroom and building together.