

**Phonological Awareness**-This refers to the amount of awareness your child has of the sound form of language. This includes their knowledge of how sounds make up words, that some words have more than one syllable, rhyming words and individual sounds in a word.

Ways to support phonological awareness include:

- Do activities to help your child build sound skills (make sure they are short and fun; avoid allowing your child to get frustrated):
  - Help your child think of a number of words that start with the /m/ or /ch/ sound, or other beginning sounds.
  - Make up silly sentences with words that begin with the same sound, such as "Nobody was nice to Nancy's neighbor".
  - Play simple rhyming or blending games with your child, such as taking turns coming up with words that rhyme (*go – no*) or blending simple words (/d/, /o/, /g/ = *dog*).
- Read books with rhymes. Teach your child rhymes, short poems, and songs.
- Practice the alphabet by pointing out letters wherever you see them and by reading alphabet books.
- Teach the alphabet, especially the letters in your child's name. Talk about letter and sounds anywhere you see print.
- Focus children's attention on the beginning sounds in words by finding pictures and objects that begin with the same sound (ball, boy, baby)
- Sing nursery rhymes with your child at home, in the car, or out and about. Nursery rhymes teach your child language, rhyme, repetition and rhythm.
- Talk about the separate sounds in words. "Do we hear /mmmm/ in the word mmmmoon? Do we hear /mmmm/ in the word cake? Is there a /k/ in cat? What is the first sound you hear in dog?" And, "Where do you hear the /g/ in pig (at the beginning middle or the end of the word)?"
- Become a robot leader! Say this rhyme in a robot voice, sound out simple words, and have your child respond: "I am a robot. Can you help me? Can you tell me what I see? I see a /c/ /a/ /p/." Encourage your child to repeat the rhyme in "robot talk" and then blend the final word to answer the robot's question.
- Take turns to come up with words that rhyme. For example, "What other words sound like car?"
- Play word games that encourage your child to learn sounds. For example, 'I Spy' 'I spy with my little eye something beginning with /ffff/. What do you think I'm looking at that starts with that sound?'

- Ask your child to clap with you as you sound out the syllables in words. For example: sunshine (sun-shine, two claps), alphabet (alph-a-bet, three claps). Begin with two or three syllable words and build up to longer words, such as imagination (i-mag-in-a-tion, five claps).
- Teach your child the separate sounds in his name. For example, 'Sam' has three sounds – sss-aaa-mmm.
- Read books with rhymes. Books by Dr Seuss and Pamela Allen are a hit with many children. Try 'The Cat in the Hat' or 'Doodledum Dancing'.
- Choose a letter and play the game 'I went to the shop and I bought...' For example, 'I went to the shop and I bought a cup. I went to the shop and I bought a cup and a crocodile'. For a trickier version, the next item must start with the last sound in the previous item. 'I went to the shop and I bought a cup. I went to the shop and I bought a cup and a pig.'
- Teach your child the words on street signs such as 'Stop' and 'Give way'. Sound out the words, and ask your child what sounds they start and finish with.