

# Helping Your Child Be Ready to Learn to Read

Most children learn to read unfamiliar words when they are in kindergarten, first and second grade. For younger children, there are many things that parents and adults can do to help them develop the foundational skills that will build their success for the elementary school reading program.

The New Mexico Early Learning Outcomes include several school-success building skills related to reading and writing. Our goal for each child is that he or she:

- Learn to listen to directions and conversations
- Begin to hear the sounds that words and letters make
- Speak in his or her home language to communicate with others
- Enjoy looking at and listening to books
- Show understanding of a story read aloud by asking questions and making comments
- Start to recognize letters
- Attempt to scribble or write letters and words

The following activities can help support your child's development of the skills that will help your child learn to read in kindergarten, first or second grade:

## Share Your Reading With Your Child

Read books, magazines or newspapers with your child. You can look at the pictures, talk about what you see, point to objects, give them names, read the print, or read the full story. All of these experiences will help your child develop an interest in reading.

You can also read words and phrases together on the television, on signs out in the community, on letters you write or receive, on grocery coupons and labels on food products. This helps your child see how reading is an important part of our lives.

As you share your reading, play games with your child. When driving down the road in the family car, look for the letter "A" on a sign. Or see if your child can find the McDonald's golden arches and other fast food signs. When grocery shopping, play "I'm trying to find the cereal that has a big "K" on it." You can make your errands and family trips wonderful learning experiences and more interesting for everyone along for the ride!

