

The editor of First Steps Families is a mom that had a child in the First Steps program. Hopefully the information shared will provide you with helpful resources for your family. To conserve resources and to make sure you don't miss out on helpful information, please send your e-mail address to Connie Coovert at cccoov2@uky.edu to receive the newsletter electronically or call me at 859-257-6427 to arrange for a hard copy.

Connie



Almost Summertime...and the Readin' is Breezy

You can use books and other activities to build your child's literacy skills.

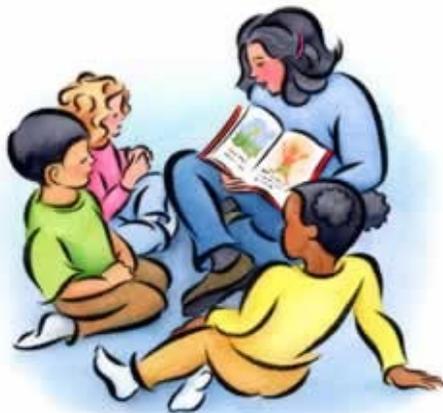
Summer is a perfect time to roll out the charming, heartwarming books of early childhood. Babies start learning from the minute they are born. Reading to them regularly throughout their infancy and childhood helps them gain the literacy skills they will need to read, write, speak, and listen to the best of their ability.

Literacy isn't just about reading. It also includes talking to your child about the objects in his or her world, responding to coos and cries, singing songs, encouraging the use of crayons and other writing tools, and more. In other words, opportunities for literacy are everywhere you go!

No matter what your child's developmental delay or disability, you can integrate many literacy-rich experiences into every part of your child's day. For example, in addition to reading to your child every day, you can:

Talk and sing to your child while you go about daily tasks.

- ◆ Name clothing, body parts, food, colors, shapes, numbers.
- ◆ Describe the different qualities of things: soft/hard, tall/short, smooth/rough, hot/cold, etc.
- ◆ Talk with your child about the weather, scenery, vehicles, and other things you see and hear when you are in the car.
- ◆ At bath time, join your child in singing a favorite song and splashing in the tub.



Show that you value reading.

- ◆ Let your child see you reading.
- ◆ Make catalogs, books, and magazines available throughout your home.
- ◆ Visit the library regularly. Obtain a library card in your child's name.
- ◆ Give books as gifts for special occasions

Encourage writing:

- ◆ Keep crayons, pencils, markers, pens, and paintbrushes easily available.
- ◆ Let your child help you make a grocery list or sign a birthday card.
- ◆ Put your child's drawings on the refrigerator at child's-eye level.

PARENT CONSULTANT

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We are on the Web:
[http://chfs.ky.gov/
dph/firststeps.htm](http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/firststeps.htm)
Or
kyfirststeps.org



What are Medicaid Waiver Pro- grams?

**Come and find
out!**

May 24, 2012

10:00am—12:00pm

Rowan County Health
Center

If you are elderly or disabled, Medicaid waiver programs such as the *Michelle P. Waiver* or the *Home and Community Based Waiver* can provide many different services to support your family.

Contact Pam at pwm007@windstream.net for questions or details.

FUN WITH FRUIT LOOPS

Day to day activities can be turned into fun that supports your child's growth and development in various ways. Here is a fun activity with simple steps and simple everyday materials for you and your child to enjoy!

Fruit Loop Sand Art and Development Activity (1) Get a box of Fruit Loops (or similar colored loop cereal) (2) Have the child sort the colors into small plastic sandwich bags or you can sort the fruit loops ahead of time for them (3) Put the different colors into baggies and let them crush them until the loops are powdery. Then let them pour the powder-like colored sand in to a baby food jar (or similar clear container with lid) and make layers. This looks like real sand art, without the hazard of them eating the sand. :) Plus, I think children of many ages and abilities would enjoy doing this!

Communication and Language Skills By simply talking about the sorted colors of loops with your child you are enhancing language skills. Saying "this is a green fruit loop", and "this is a blue one" exposes the child to words that describe the differences of these loops. You can also talk about putting them "in" the bag and saying this is how we crush the loops. Providing an example or modeling the activity along with using your words to describe what your doing gives your child a verbal cue about each action (e.g., Put in the bag, crush the fruit loops). Remember that you and your child get to practice this over and over and repetition enhances learning.

Fine Motor (small muscle movements) Skills Guide child to use a pinch type grasp to either sort the loops by color or place them "in" a bag. The crushing of the loops in the bags can be done with a rolling pin (and modified or adapted for your child by providing your hands over their hand support) or simply by using their fist.

Adaptive or Self Help Skills When ready for finger feeding, children can practice feeding themselves by using their own hands and fingers to pick up the little snack pieces and bring to their mouth. Remember to provide close supervision when children are placing food in their mouth/eating.

Cognitive (thinking) Skills This sorting activity can help with the concept of "same" and "different" colors. This also helps your child practice the concept of "in", and "out" (for more complex words try "under" and "over"). Remember practicing an activity over and over helps children learn and develop skills.

Social/Emotional Skills During this activity whether its sitting side by side or in a high chair, this engages you and your child in a joint play activity. This can provide meaningful contact and sense of support during play. Playing together allows for building of trust and encourages a positive relationship with your child.

Source: Kristi Lunceford, Early Childhood Specialist

INFANT-TODDLER INSTITUTE



The 2012 Infant-Toddler Institute will be held in Lexington at the Lexington Convention Center & Hyatt Regency Hotel. Registration information is now available.

Some family scholarships are available. For more information contact Connie Covert at ccoov2@uky.edu, or call 859-257-6427.