

Ready to Write

- When your baby spends time on their tummy, they strengthen their core muscles and gain the body control that they will eventually need for writing!
- Encourage your baby to use their fingers to explore food, making marks in yogurt or sauce
- Help your little one practise controlling their arms by singing action songs like *Wind the bobbin up* and *Row row row your boat* and *Wheels on the bus*
- Play rolling and throwing with a ball
- Playing with play-dough strengthens little fingers
- When playing outside, provide a pot of water and large brush to "paint"
- Encourage your child to write for a purpose, writing their own shopping lists, notes and letters

Ready to Count

- Make counting part of your daily routine – count fingers and toes when changing your baby
- Count wooden bricks as you build them into a tower and watch your baby's enjoyment in knocking it down
- Use tissue boxes and snack tubes for a posting game using small toys. Introduce new words about sizes and shapes
- Sing counting songs with actions – eg *5 little ducks* and *5 little monkeys*
- Count every day - stairs as you climb them, toys when you tidy up
- Point out numbers and shapes at home and when you are out and about, on road signs, doors and when shopping
- Play counting board games together- snakes and ladders, ludo, dominos

Ready to Read

Sharing books every day from very young will encourage a lifetime love of reading. Your child can join the library at any age.

- Your baby is never too young to enjoy books. Choose simple board books with just a few words and pictures to talk about. Babies will enjoy the familiarity of sharing the same book lots of times
- Sing nursery rhymes together every day. Research has shown that the children who do best at primary school are often the ones who know lots of nursery rhymes!
- Encourage your child to tell you the story by using the pictures in the book
- Help your child to spot letters and words on packaging and signs
- Play with words together. Make up funny rhymes, and silly stories
- Can your child hear words that begin with the same sound? eg baby, ball, bottle

Ready to Learn

Your child starts to learn from inside the womb, beginning to hear your voice and form an attachment to you. You are your child's first playmate and teacher!

Babies and young children learn through:

- Playing, this might be the same thing repeated over and over again!
- Being curious and exploring the world around them
- Real experiences and objects to stimulate their senses - like collecting leaves in the woods
- Being involved in daily routines –like helping to lay the table, sorting the washing, matching socks
- Talking about the things that you do and see together

HOME LANGUAGE

Remember your Home Language is very important. Spend time talking, reading and singing to your child in your most fluent language.

For lots more ideas on how to help your child to have the best start, visit the TLC website www.tlc-essex.info

Like us on [facebook.com/talklistencuddle](https://www.facebook.com/talklistencuddle)

This information is issued by Essex County Council, Early Years and Childcare.

You can contact us in the following ways:

By email:
earlyyears@essex.gov.uk

Visit our website:
www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Early-Years-Childcare

By post:
Early Years and Childcare
Essex County Council, PO Box 47
Chelmsford CM2 6WN



Ready to Explore

- Let your baby explore objects collected from around the house, for example, wooden spoons, metal pots and soft brushes. Introduce words such as hard, soft and shiny
- Have fun filling and emptying containers at bath-time.
- Blow bubbles, talk about their colours and how they float, try to catch them... POP!
- Chase your shadows when you are outside, try to catch them, can you make them bigger and smaller?
- Let your child help you in the kitchen, stirring, mixing, pouring, rolling, peeling, chopping, washing and cleaning!
- Bake and cook together, talking about the ingredients and the changes that happen when they are mixed and cooked
- Explore the smell, taste and feel of the fruit and vegetables that you eat together

Ready to Make Friends and Join in

- Join a parent and toddler group so that you and your baby can make new friends. Your local Children's Centre will have all the information about activities in your area
- Play matching and simple turn taking games such as picture dominoes and picture lotto. You can make these very easily by cutting up logos from familiar food boxes
- Play board games together to learn about following instructions and taking turns
- Talk about emotions with your child so they learn how to tell you how they are feeling and to explore how others may feel too



Helping your child
to learn at home
and out and about



