



Pathways to Success

Helpful Strategies for Parents and Caregivers of Young Children

Language Fun – Singing and Playing Games

Singing songs and playing games are great activities that help build language skills. Here are some suggestions you can use to have fun with your child and build their language skills at the same time!

SINGING AND LEARNING LANGUAGE

Singing repetitive songs with your child is a fun activity that helps him learn about words, ideas, groups, and order.

For example, the song *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* teaches your child about farm animals and the sounds they make. Let your child choose the animals he'd like to sing about. This helps him practice naming objects and connecting the different sounds with the correct animals.

Change the song to *Old MacDonald Had a Zoo* to include different zoo animals and the different sounds they make.

For a challenge, try singing “*Old MacDonald Had a Fruit Store*”, and you could sing: “And at his store he had an apple, E-I-E-I-O. With shiny, red peel; a shiny, red peel; here a peel, there a peel, everywhere a peel, peel”.

Other good songs to sing with our child include:

- “The Wheels on the Bus”
- “If You're Happy and You Know It”
- “Twinkle, Twinkle little Stars”
- “The Itsy Bitsy Spider”
- “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”
- “Mary Had a Little Lamb”

I SPY GAME

I Spy is a great game to help your child develop thinking, describing, and listening skills. At first, you can talk about its colour, its size, its function or where it is in space (under, behind or on...). Then, you can expand by using different descriptive words (little/big, dirty/clean, near/far...). You can take turns giving clues and guessing the answer.

For example, “I spy something blue”, “I spy something you use to wash dishes”, or “I spy something red and small with a peel”.

This game can easily be played in the car, outside, in the classroom or at home. If your child has difficulties guessing the answer, offer hints to help. For more of a challenge, use the variation of this game: “I am thinking of something...”