

Talking with your child develops literacy skills



Did you know that the conversations you have with your preschooler can have a dramatic impact on future school success? Research shows that children who hear and use more

words in conversations with parents in the first three years of life are more prepared to succeed in school than children who don't.

When you have back-and-forth conversations with your child, you are teaching vocabulary, language skills and listening skills. You can emphasize these early literacy skills throughout the day—even if you don't have a book with you! Here's how:

- **In the car**, sing with your child or take turns telling stories. You can also discuss what you see—farm animals, buildings, etc. Ask your child to look for letters on signs or license plates.



- **At the store**, name a shape or color and help your child find a food that matches it. Talk about how foods grow or how items are made. Ask your child to help count items.
- **During meals**, use specific words, like *squash* instead of just *vegetables*. Pick up an object, such as a napkin, and ask your child, "What is this? Tell me what we do with it." Discuss your day—and then ask about your child's day.