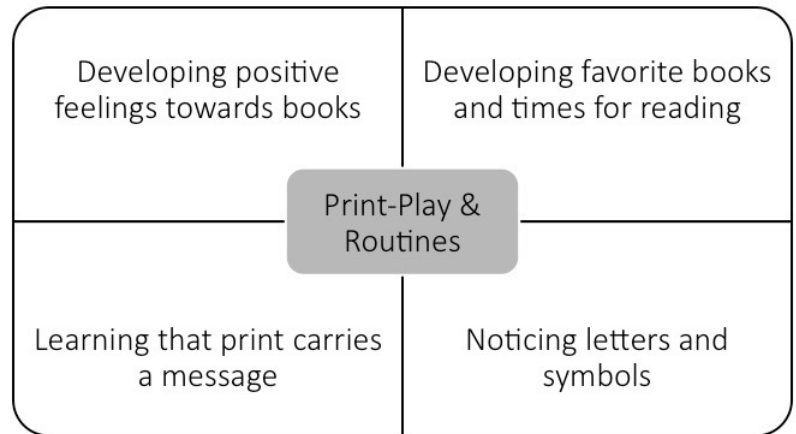


Print-Play and Routines

Ages 0-3

What is Print-Play and Routines?

Print-Play & Routines is our name for the print part of the baby or toddler’s early reading world– her experiences with books and letters. This is one of three key areas that the PUP Toolkit focuses on to get our youngest children on the path to strong reading—because research tells us that there are a number of important skills that develop when children have lots of experiences with books and letters from the time they are babies. For example, maybe most obviously, their letter knowledge begins to develop and then, over time, their understanding of the alphabet. And if this part of the baby or toddler’s literacy world is well-developed, their early and emerging understanding of the ways that “print” works for the purposes of reading also develops—for example, at a young age they start to see print as having a message and representing ideas and information, and, over time, learn that English print works from left to right and top to bottom, and that illustrations relate to the print on the page. Through Print-Play & Routines children also build their language skills, especially the language skills that are closely linked to later reading ability, and build their Everyday Learning Skills.



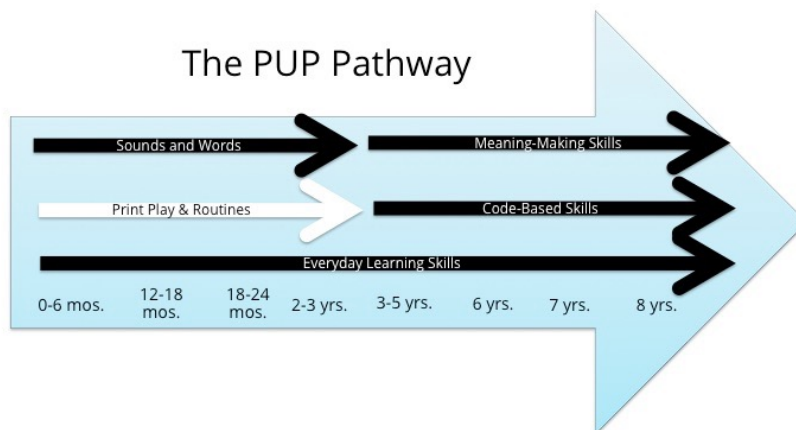
What does the development of Print-Play and Routines look like and feel like?

As comes clear in the questions that you answer about your child’s Print-Play & Routines, its development takes many different shapes and forms, across the days and years. And of course, these developing skills don’t look or feel anything like the first grader who is reading words on the page—we’re focused here on the baby and toddler’s path to that later skill and success.

For **babies**, it’s about listening to or looking at books being read by adults or older siblings. As the baby can hold her head up and begin to focus on pictures, she might be looking at books (or even a page!) on the blanket she is sitting on, or looking at the board book in the stroller or the car. Whether she is listening to, looking at or chewing on the book as part of daytime activity or a bedtime routine, print is now part of her world.

For **toddlers**, Print-Play & Routines under development still doesn't look anything like the first grader who is reading the words on the page. In fact, the busy toddler "listening" to a story may actually be moving all around and appear not to be listening at all! As an adult is reading, he might wander between the pictures that are on the pages of the book being read, and whatever is interesting him on the floor—even if it

doesn't seem that way, he's likely listening and actually developing reading skills. Developing Print-Play & Routines also looks and feels like the toddler who brings the adult the book to read—maybe even picking up on routines if it's at a certain time in the day—and/or is lifting the flaps to feel different textures on the page, or pushing buttons on the pages, even if he's not following the story from beginning to end. He might also show signs of having a few favorite books—that's part of developing a print world and reading skills.



Print-Play & Routines in the life of the **3 year-old** is really about having favorite stories and reading them over and over and over again—and also "reading" the books to the adults. It's about attaching to characters and emotions, and calling out specific pictures, and talking about the book. For this busy preschooler, Print Play & Routines also looks and feels like noticing and interacting with letters— noting them on wall posters, in letter puzzles and on cereal boxes, for example. When the time is right, Print Play & Routines is also about starting to "write" – the letters of the alphabet, names, words—and to explain their drawings with a story or a few words.

What can parents do to promote Print-Play & Routines?

Getting children to strong skills in this area means modeling, teaching and practice by families, caregivers in care settings, and educators in preschools and schools. There is a lot of research that documents early literacy development among our youngest children and this research forms the basis for many recommendations and parent resources. The general recommendations made to families and educators and caregivers in care settings and in preschools and schools to promote their children's Print Play & Routines is to focus on having print become part of the child's everyday life, with the two-part goal of helping children: 1) develop positive feelings towards books; and 2) to understand that print carries a message, and how books and print work in that way.

Given this goal, the recommendations for **babies** tend to center on having lots of books around, even in the toy bin and waterproof ones in the bath, encouraging them to play with and look at them, even chewing on them (!), and listening to stories from the earliest days. The recommendations also focus on shared book reading routines (morning, through the day or in the evening), talking about the story, but also about how the book works, with a title and the different pages, and the way the words go with the illustrations, for example. For **toddlers** and **preschoolers**, the recommendations focus on continuing to have print around as part of daily

life—not just through books, but also with things like wall posters and letter puzzles. As far as shared reading and activities with books, the recommendations focus on starting to work on the idea of a beginning and an ending, reading and talking about family favorites, and making connections between ideas, feelings, and people in books and your child’s world.

Turn to the PUP Toolkit for a sense of how these skills are developing for your baby or toddler and for specific recommendations on how to support this skill development in your child, always in fun and engaging ways, and as part of your everyday life.

If the PUP Toolkit is not for you at this time, but you would like to learn more about building your child’s reading skills, here are some general resources we recommend:

- **“Building Literacy Skills Every Day.” (PBS Parents).** Reading activities to do at home, during mealtime, and even while watching TV. <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/reading-language/reading-activities/>
- **“Tips for Reading with your Children.” (Seussville).** Tips your child’s reading enjoyment, with advice from those with a connection to Dr. Seuss. http://www.seussville.com/Parents/tips_reading_child.php
- **“How to Read Aloud to Your Child.” (Reading is Fundamental).** Outlines ways to engage in successful read alouds and tips for choosing books. <http://www.rif.org/literacy-resources/tips-resources/how-to-read-aloud-to-your-child/>.