Is Your Child Ready to Read?
Developing Literacy Skills at Home
One of the joys of raising a child is to watch as he or she learns new skills and discovers the sense of pride that comes from achieving success. Learning to read is one of those milestones for children that parents eagerly await and often worry about. Parents everywhere want to do their best to help their children prepare for reading success.

Learning to read is a challenging task for many children, far more difficult than learning to speak or walk in most cases. Think about all of the skills that go into achieving success in reading:

- Understanding the way speech sounds make up words
- Focusing on printed marks (letters and words)
- Connecting speech sounds to letters
- Blending letter sounds smoothly into words
- Controlling eye movements across the page
- Building images and ideas
- Comparing new ideas with what is already known
- Storing the ideas in memory

We should not be surprised that many children struggle with such a complex activity. Did you know that 15 to 20 percent of all people have a specific reading disability called dyslexia? And that it is the leading cause of reading failure? While this can be frightening to think about when you have a young child, you should know that nearly all children with dyslexia can become successful readers. This is especially true when a child’s risk is identified early, and the best science-based methods are used to teach reading. The saying, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is as true for reading success as any other problem your child might face.

Nemours BrightStart! Dyslexia Initiative was created just for this purpose. We level the academic playing field for young, vulnerable learners by giving you information on how to support your child on the reading journey. I can’t think of a better way for Nemours to show its commitment to the future health and well-being of all children than through Nemours BrightStart!

Respectfully,

Laura L. Bailet, PhD
About Nemours and Nemours BrightStart!

Nemours is a premier pediatric health system, combining medical care delivery with prevention, health information and research powered by breakthrough technology—all aimed at achieving the ultimate in patient family satisfaction and quality health results.

Innovation is the hallmark of our quest to end disabling conditions, resulting in unique efforts on behalf of children such as Nemours BrightStart! Designed by Nemours specialists in brain science, research and early learning, this one-of-a-kind program extends Nemours’ medical and scientific knowledge into the community to address the issue of identifying children at risk of dyslexia before they enter kindergarten. Through our free screening for four-year-olds we provide instructional support for children and families. At this early stage, we can build the essential foundation for reading success.

About Dyslexia

Dyslexia is the most common cause of all reading problems, occurring in 15 to 20 percent of the population. Dyslexia runs in families; children whose parents struggled with reading are more likely to have dyslexia.

People with dyslexia are intelligent, but have subtle brain processing problems that make reading and spelling difficult. They struggle with analyzing and blending sounds within words and learning to recognize words quickly. This makes reading slow and labored and hinders reading comprehension.

Most dyslexia is not identified until third grade or later. By then, children have fallen behind and may become so frustrated that they give up. That’s why Nemours BrightStart! was created—to identify young children at risk for reading failure and provide support before they have a chance to fail.

Risk Factors for Dyslexia

- Family history of dyslexia
- Parent who does not read well
- Child history of speech and language delays
- Child history of attentional problems

Risk Factors May Be Further Compounded By:

- Poverty
- Attendance at a school with a high poverty rate
- Non-English speaking parent
Setting a Path for Reading Success

Nemours recognizes that success in reading is essential for a child’s well-being. Children experience tremendous frustration when they cannot learn along with their peers. Research indicates that a gap in skills is often apparent before a child even enters kindergarten.

Though we do not diagnose dyslexia for very young children, our early literacy specialists are able to identify those who are at risk. We do this by looking for mastery of important pre-literacy concepts that are linked to reading success. It is our goal to help parents understand what these pre-literacy concepts are and learn how to encourage their child to master them through fun activities.

This booklet offers parents a guide for interpreting their child’s screening results, activities that can be used at home to enhance their child’s pre-literacy skills and resources that may be helpful along the road to reading readiness.

In the event that your child does display signs of being at risk for dyslexia, references are provided to help you understand the special needs as well as talents of people with dyslexia. Individuals with dyslexia can overcome the challenge of learning to read and become successful adults. In fact, some of the world’s most imaginative minds have been dyslexic.

We encourage you to visit our web site, www.nemours.org/brightstart, for more information about Nemours and Nemours BrightStart! Together, we can help narrow the gap in early literacy skills and provide a bright start for our youngest readers!
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Important Literacy Terms

Listed below are commonly used pre-literacy terms. This glossary may come in handy as you work with your child to develop and enhance his or her reading skills.

**alliteration**: the repetition of the beginning sound in neighboring words (examples: Brown Bear Brown or Willard Wooten walked along the wooden pathway)

**cognitive skills**: skills that enhance the ability to think and reason

**compound word blending**: putting words together to make a new word (example: dog and house make doghouse)

**elision**: omitting a sound or sounds from a word then saying what is left (example: pineapple without pine is apple)

**emergent writing**: the development of writing skills and motivation for written expression through active engagement with various tools and materials

**environmental print**: recognizable print found in everyday life (examples: stop signs, McDonald’s, Target, cereal boxes)

**letter knowledge**: ability to recognize and name letters, and knowledge of which letters make which sounds

**literacy**: the ability to read and write

**motor skills**: the coordination of muscle and nerve activity to produce movement

**onset and rime**: onset is the initial sound in a word; rime is the remaining part of the word (example: moon (onset is /m/, rime is /oon/)

**phonemic awareness**: the ability to detect and manipulate speech sounds in words (example: cat has three phonemes /k/ /a/ /t/)

**phonological awareness**: understanding that oral language has structure that is separate from meaning, and having the ability to detect and manipulate smaller speech units within oral language (examples: detecting syllables within words or appreciating rhyme patterns)

**pre-literacy skills**: skills that must be in place before reading can occur (examples: recognizing letters, knowing letter sounds, and general knowledge of language)

**print awareness**: the earliest understanding that written language carries meaning

**rhyme**: identical sounds occurring in two or more words, from the last vowel to the end of the word (examples: cat/hat, bee/tree)

**syllables**: units of sound that make up a word (example: di-no-saur)

**syllable blending**: putting syllables together to make a word
Early Pre-Reading Milestones

6 Months – 12 Months

Motor Skills:
• Reaches for book
• Puts book in mouth
• Sits in lap, head steady
• Turns pages with adult help

Cognitive Skills:
• Looks at pictures
• Vocalizes, pats pictures
• Prefers pictures of faces

What Parents Can Do:
• Use book that child can safely put in mouth
• Choose books with large pictures and few words
• Hold child comfortably, with face-to-face gaze
• Follow baby’s cues for “more” and “stop”
• Point to and name pictures

12 Months – 18 Months

Motor Skills:
• Sits without support
• May carry book
• Holds book with help
• Turns board pages, several at a time

Language and Cognitive Skills:
• Points at pictures with one finger
• May make same sound for particular picture
• Points when asked, “Where’s…?”
• Turns book right side up
• Gives book to adult to read

What Parents Can Do:
• Respond to child’s prompting to read
• Let the child control the book
• Name and describe pictures
• Ask, “Where’s the…?” and let child point
• Accept child’s short attention span and desire to move around while you read

18 Months – 24 Months

Motor Skills:
• Turns board book pages easily, one at a time
• Carries book around the house

Language and Cognitive Skills:
• Names familiar pictures
• Fills in words in familiar stories
• “Reads” to dolls or stuffed animals
• Recites parts of well-known stories
• Attention span highly variable

What Parents Can Do:
• Relate books to child’s experiences
• Use books in routines, such as at bedtime
• Ask, “What’s that?” and give child time to answer
• Pause and let child complete the sentence
24 Months – 36 Months

Motor Skills:
• Learns to handle paper pages
• Goes back and forth in books to find favorite pictures

Language and Cognitive Skills:
• Recites whole phrases, sometimes whole stories
• Coordinates text with picture
• Protests when adult gets a word wrong in a familiar story
• Reads familiar books to self

What Parents Can Do:
• Choose a variety of book types—picture, story, alphabet, rhyming and counting
• Keep using books in routines, such as at bedtime
• Willingly read the same story over and over
• Point to pictures and ask, “What’s that?”
• Have conversations about the story
• Relate books to child’s experiences
• Provide paper and various markers

3 Years and Up

Motor Skills:
• Handles books well
• Turns pages one at a time

Language and Cognitive Skills:
• Listens to longer stories
• Can retell a familiar story
• Understands what text is
• Moves finger along with text
• “Writes” name
• Moves toward letter recognition

What Parents Can Do:
• Have conversations with child about the story and pictures
• Encourage writing and drawing
• Let the child tell the story
• Continue choosing a variety of books
• Provide plastic or wooden alphabet letters
About the Emergent Literacy Screening Instrument

Nemours BrightStart! provides a free, quick educational screening of important pre-literacy skills for four-year-olds. A key goal of Nemours BrightStart! is to provide early identification of children who are behind for their age in the skills that will form the foundation for learning to read. These pre-literacy skills include letter recognition, syllable segmentation, rhyming, beginning sounds and print awareness. Please note: this is only an educational screen, it is neither a medical nor a psychological evaluation. No diagnoses are made on the basis of the screening results.

The pre-literacy screening instrument is called “Get Ready to Read” (GRTR). It is a 20-item emergent literacy screening instrument designed for pre-kindergarten children, to help determine their competency on basic pre-reading skills. For more information, visit www.getreadytoread.org; there you will find the screening instrument (which you can administer at home with your child) as well as helpful information and activities to do with your child to enrich their literacy skills.

Skills Measured:

- Print awareness
- Beginning writing
- Rhyming
- Blending compound words
- Elision (deleting a syllable from a word)
- Letter names
- Beginning sounds
- Blending two syllables into words
- Blending the beginning sound (onset) with the rest of the word (rime)
# Emergent Literacy Screening Report

To be completed by Nemours BrightStart! during screening or by parent(s) along with at-home screening. To access the screening instrument go to [www.getreadytoread.org](http://www.getreadytoread.org).

**Student Name:** ___________________________  **DOB:** ___________________________

**Location:** ___________________________  **Date:** ___________________________

### Get Ready to Read Total Risk Assignment (out of 20 possible points) (+ = Satisfactory; - = At Risk)

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<tr>
<td>Letter Knowledge</td>
<td>6 / 6</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
<td>3 / 3</td>
<td>6 / 6</td>
<td>1 / 1</td>
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### If your child scored 16-20:
- Your child has mastered many important pre-literacy skills

### If your child scored 12-15:
- Your child has made considerable progress in acquiring pre-literacy skills
- Continue to practice at home

### If your child scored 9-11:
- Home literacy activities are recommended to further strengthen and build these skills

### If your child scored 0-8:
- Your child is struggling with basic pre-literacy skills
- It is very important to work on pre-literacy skills at home on a daily basis
- It is recommended that you talk with your child’s pre-kindergarten teacher
Ways You Can Help Your Child at Home

The following activities and tips should be used as a guide for building important pre-literacy and developmental skills at home with your child.

Print Awareness

- Read aloud daily
- Let your child see you writing (grocery lists, phone messages)
- Provide your child with writing materials and opportunities to draw/write daily
- Point to words while reading (left to right, top to bottom)
- Point out letters and symbols in the environment (stop signs, Publix, K-Mart, McDonald’s…)
- Read words from household items

Letter Names and Sounds

- Help your child recognize his/her own name in print
- Use familiar signs and symbols to recognize the letters in your child’s name
- Help your child to identify the letters and sounds in words
- Encourage your child to practice writing his or her name
- Provide alphabet magnets, alphabet books, alphabet puzzles, Play-Doh and alphabet cookie cutters
- Tell your child the beginning sounds of familiar words such as:
  - His or her own name and the names of family members
  - Favorite foods (apples, bananas, carrots)
  - Popular animals (dog, elephant, lion, tiger)
  - Cartoon characters
- Look through picture books
- Discuss pictures in books and magazines
- Introduce and build new vocabulary (soccer ball, telephone, zebra)

Rhyming

- Talk about words that rhyme (tree/bee; red/bed; cat/hat)
- Recite nursery rhymes
- Sing songs
- Read poems

Phonological Awareness

- While reading, point out pictures with matching beginning sounds (cat/car; turtle/tiger)
- In conversation, talk about words with the same beginning sound (ball/baby; doll/door)
Recommended Books to Read With Your Child

Enjoy the following books with your child and work on specific literacy, social and developmental skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOOK</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where the Wild Things Are</td>
<td>Maurice Sendak</td>
<td>Beginning writing, vocabulary development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will I Have a Friend?</td>
<td>Miriam Cohen</td>
<td>Environmental print, paternal involvement, concept of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Black Fly</td>
<td>Jim Aylesworth</td>
<td>Rhyming, alliteration, letter knowledge, letter sound, beginning letter and sound, print awareness, beginning writing, environmental print, vocabulary development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Little Kittens</td>
<td>Paul Galdone</td>
<td>Rhyming, environmental print, inventive spelling, vocabulary development, real and make-believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kissing Hand</td>
<td>Audrey Penn</td>
<td>Beginning writing, onset/rime, syllable blending, transition into school and separation anxiety, sign language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Farm</td>
<td>Lois Ehlert</td>
<td>Shapes, colors, visual discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You Give a Mouse a Cookie</td>
<td>Laura Joffe, Numeroff</td>
<td>Making predictions, alliteration, letter sounds, print awareness, beginning writing, cause and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep in a Jeep</td>
<td>Nancy Shaw</td>
<td>Rhyming, vocabulary development, making predictions, beginning writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?</em></td>
<td>Nancy White Carlstrom</td>
<td>Rhyming, alliteration, concept of a day (morning, noon and night), print awareness, colors, beginning writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ook the Book: and Other Silly Rhymes</em></td>
<td>Lissa Rovetch</td>
<td>Beginning writing, rhyming, onset/rime, elision, print awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sheep in a Shop</em></td>
<td>Nancy Shaw</td>
<td>Print awareness, beginning writing, rhyming, using money and trade to buy things at a store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Snowy Day</em></td>
<td>Ezra Jack Keats</td>
<td>Print awareness, letter knowledge, letter sound, beginning writing, beginning sounds, compound blending, the season of winter, concept of a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Whistle for Willie</em></td>
<td>Ezra Jack Keats</td>
<td>Alliteration, print awareness, beginning writing, letter knowledge (w), letter sound, beginning sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Summer Sun Risin’</em></td>
<td>W. Nikola-Lisa</td>
<td>Rhyming, vocabulary development, family and life on a farm, farm animals, beginning writing, concept of a day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bein’ With You This Way</em></td>
<td>W. Nikola-Lisa</td>
<td>Print awareness, rhyming, onset/rime, bringing together children with cultural differences, concept of same and different, how children play together, cooperation and sharing, valuing cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</em></td>
<td>Bill Martin, Jr. John Archambault</td>
<td>Letter names, upper/lowercase letters, print awareness, beginning writing, rhyme, predictions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Books to Improve Skills

**Wordless Books** Use these books to improve beginning writing skills:

- *Island Dog* by Rebecca Goodale
- *Good Night, Garden Gnome* by Jamichael Henterly
- *The Red Book* by Barbara Lehman
- *The Spring Hat* by Madelaine Gill

**Books to Read with Dad** The following books will help dad and child bond as well as encourage literacy and healthy development:

- *A Day with Dad* by Bo R. Holmberg
- *My Daddy and Me* by Jerry Spinelli

**Unique Alphabet Books** Use these books to improve skills such as letter knowledge, letter sounds, beginning sounds, alliteration, print awareness, rhyming, beginning writing, vocabulary development, real and make-believe scenes, nonsensical humor, rhyming, detailed illustrations for discussion and visual learning:

- *I Love the Alphabet* by Dar Hosta
- *“A” Isn’t for Fox: An Isn’t Alphabet* by Wendy Ulmer
- *Little Bitty Mousie* by Jim Aylesworth

**Nursery Rhymes** Use these books to improve important literacy skills such as rhyming, repetitive text, and sing-along as well as identifying animals and the sounds they make:

- *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* by Jane Cabrera

**Books About Animals** These fun books about animals can also be used to improve important literacy skills such as predictive outcomes, beginning writing, alliteration and developmental skills such as make-believe and cause and effect:

- *There’s Always Room for One More* by Ingrid and Dieter Schubert
- *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey
- *Cows in the Kitchen* by June Crebbin

**Books to Prepare Your Pre-Kindergartner for School** Use these books to help you and your child learn what to expect at school and ease the transition for first-time preschoolers:

- *Little School* by Beth Norling
- *I Can Do It!* by Jana Novotny Hunter and Lucy Richards
Home Literacy Environment Checklist

**Is your home literacy-friendly?**

You are your child’s first teacher. Your home is where your child will get his or her first experiences with books and reading.

Look around your home and think about what you do with your child. If the statement on the checklist is true, place a check in the “true” column. If the statement is false, place a check in the “false” column. When you are finished, count up the number of checks in the true column and find that number on the chart at the end of the checklist. Use the results as a guideline to see what you can do to help your child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What my child has…</th>
<th>TRUE</th>
<th>FALSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child has at least one alphabet book (e.g., Dr. Seuss’s <em>ABC</em> book).</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has magnetized alphabet letters to play with.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has crayons and pencils readily available for writing and drawing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has paper readily available for writing and drawing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has a table or surface readily available for writing or drawing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has at least one rhyme book (e.g., Joseph Slate’s <em>Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has more than one rhyme book.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has at least 10 picture books.</td>
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<td>My child has at least 20 picture books.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has at least 50 picture books.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child plays beginning reading and alphabet games on a computer (e.g., <em>Reader Rabbit</em> or <em>Bailey’s Book House</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>My child has materials and games to help learn the alphabet.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I or another adult do…</th>
<th>TRUE</th>
<th>FALSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house read a picture book with my child at least once a week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house read a picture book with my child at least four times a week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house teach new words to my child at least once a week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house teach new words to my child nearly every day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house have a detailed and informative conversation with my child at least once a week (e.g., “How do you think ice cream is made?”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house have a detailed and informative conversation with my child nearly every day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house help my child learn nursery rhymes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house encourage my child to tell me what he or she wants using complete sentences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I or another adult in the house take my child to the library or a bookstore at least once every two months.</td>
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</table>
What my child sees me or another adult doing…

My child sees me or another adult in the house reading books, magazines or the newspaper at least once a week.

My child sees me or another adult in the house reading books, magazines or the newspaper nearly every day.

What I am…

I am a good reader.

I have a large vocabulary.

I began to read picture books with my child before he or she was one year old.

I enjoy reading picture books with my child.

I expect that my child will work to his or her potential in school.

Now or in the past, I or another adult encourage or help my child…

I or another adult in the house help my child learn to write his or her name.

I or another adult in the house help my child learn to write other people’s names.

I or another adult in the house help my child learn how to rhyme.

I or another adult in the house help my child learn the sounds that letters of the alphabet make (e.g., “M” makes the mmmm sound).

Count up the number of statements marked TRUE and put that number in the box to the right.

30 - 37 Home literacy environment has most of the necessary supportive elements

20 - 29 Home literacy environment has many supportive elements

11 - 19 Home literacy environment has some supportive elements

0 - 10 Home literacy environment needs improvement

Get Ready to Read!, Home Literacy Environment Checklist. Get Ready to Read! is a project of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. For more information about this program please visit www.GetReadytoRead.org.
Possible Signs of Dyslexia

Early identification is critical to overcoming the challenges of dyslexia. The sooner a child is identified, the sooner he or she can receive the instruction needed to become a successful reader. The following are some potential signs of dyslexia that parents should be aware of. You may also want to refer to the “Ready Reader Roadmap” located on the inside back cover of this parent guide.

Possible Signs of Dyslexia
(Children Up to Age 8)
• Difficulty learning letter names and letter sounds
• Problems with rhyming
• Problems separating and blending sounds within words
• Trouble reading simple, high frequency words (cat, boy, who…)
• Trouble with phonics

Additional Signs of Dyslexia
(Children Age 8 and Older)
• Difficulty with spelling
• Trouble sounding out longer words
• Difficulty completing longer reading and writing assignments
• Slow, labored reading with poor comprehension
Tips for Parenting a Child With Special Needs

Young children develop in many ways physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. Understanding and nurturing these stages is one of the most important things a parent can do. Young children also grow at different rates and knowing how to encourage their achievement for the subsequent milestones will help them to reach their full potential.

Identifying challenges is the first step. As a parent, having knowledge of how a child grows and develops provides a guide. If your child isn’t developing like other children his or her age, it is important to seek professional help. Put fear and denial aside in the best interest of your child. Your pediatrician can be your first resource.

As you set out to help your child, keep these five important things in mind:

Your child deserves and needs your love. The things you love about your child will remain the same regardless of the special needs that he or she has. Special needs bring challenges, but there will always be moments of joy and calm that are essential to your parent/child bond.

A diagnosis is not the enemy. Labeling a disability need not overshadow the abilities that your child has. Labels can help you and your child to get the services, therapy, insurance coverage and proper placement in school. Labels can also promote tolerance for behaviors and lead to the understanding and support that your family needs.

You are not alone. The Internet has made it possible for families with children that have special needs to network with organizations across the world. Just remember that not all sites are created by professionals. Sites with good general information include www.kidshealth.org and www.nih.gov.

Every child is different. Children develop at their own pace and respond uniquely to medications, therapies or treatments. They follow their own path. While it is important to network with others, don’t assume that one child’s negative experience will be the same one that your child will experience. Your child is a unique individual within a range of children with a similar diagnosis.

Nurture a positive outlook every day. Life for people with disabilities has dramatically improved over the last century and there is no reason to believe that progress won’t continue. Medical breakthroughs are made every day. New therapies and techniques are constantly being developed. Love and a strong will can lead to miracles. Hope is both necessary and rational to maintain a high quality of life.
Additional Resources

Dyslexia Resources on the Web
- International Dyslexia Association
  www.interdys.org
- Learning Disabilities Online
  www.ldonline.org
- National Association of School Psychologists
  www.nasponline.org
- National Center for Learning Disabilities
  www.ncld.org
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders
  www.ninds.nih.gov
- Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities Inc.
  www.smartkidswithld.org

Books About Dyslexia
- *Parenting a Struggling Reader*
  by Susan Hall and Louisa Moats, EdD
- *Straight Talk About Reading*
  by Louisa Moats, EdD and Susan Hall
- *Overcoming Dyslexia*
  by Sally Shaywitz, MD

Books About Early Literacy
- *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children’s Reading Success*
  by the National Research Council, M. Susan Burns, edited by Peg Griffin and Catherine E. Snow

Links About Reading With Your Child
- American Library Association
  www.ala.org
- Get Ready to Read!
  www.getreadytoread.org
- Reading Rockets
  www.readingrockets.org
- Read With Me!
  www.teachersandfamilies.com
- Starfall
  www.starfall.com
- The Children’s Book Council
  www.cbcbooks.org

For additional information pertaining to the contents of this booklet, please visit www.nemours.org/brightstart or call (904) 858-3118.
**Milestones**
- **6-12 Months**
  - Looks at pictures
  - Vocalizes, pats pictures
  - Prefers pictures of faces
  - Attends to language, music, sounds

- **18-24 Months**
  - Says first words
  - May make same sound for particular picture (labels)
  - Points when asked, "Where’s... ?"
  - Turns book right side up

- **24-36 Months**
  - Gives book to adult to read
  - Names familiar pictures
  - Finds words that rhyme
  - "Reads" to dolls or stuffed animals

- **3-4 Years**
  - Reads and writes name
  - Learns letter names and sounds
  - Finds words that rhyme
  - Claps syllables in words
  - Understands story line

- **4-5 Years**
  - Reads several words
  - Knows most letters and their sounds
  - Matches words by beginning or ending sound
  - Attempts some spelling

- **5-6 Years**
  - Listens to longer stories
  - Moves finger along text
  - Pretends to read and write
  - Understands that print carries a message
  - Identifies some letters

**WARNING SIGNS**
- Stops vocalizing
- Does not respond to sound
- Does not respond to familiar faces, objects, pictures
- Struggles with letter names and sounds
- Does not read several words
- Struggles with phonics
- Dislikes reading and spelling
- Does not read and write name
- Does not understand rhyme
- Does not know any alphabet letters
- Does not say several words and short phrases
- Struggles with letter names and sounds
- Does not read several words
- Struggles with phonics
- Struggles with letter names
- Does not read several words
- Dislikes reading and spelling