

What Writing Activities Do You Do in Your Family Day Home?

I...

- Do lots of free play activities to help children develop the muscles they will use for writing (e.g. painting, drawing, using play dough, playing with flannel board stories, lacing).
- Provide opportunities for children to cut with children's scissors.
- Encourage children to scribble and experiment with writing during free play.
- Write down the stories that children tell me so that they can see their own words in print.
- Use lower case and upper case letters as appropriate.
- Take photos of children playing and post the photos with labels of the activities (e.g. 'John is eating his snack.')

How Do You Work with Families in Your Family Day Home?

I...

- Communicate with parents or other family members every day.
- Share what I know about literacy and language with parents through formal meetings, pick up and drop off chats, and printed information.
- Encourage parents to read to their children daily.
- Share literacy activities, books, videos, written materials, community resources, and other information with families.
- Encourage the use of children's home languages in my program through activities, books, songs and vocabulary.
- Encourage parents to come into the program and read to children.
- Encourage the child's family to seek further help from a qualified professional if I am concerned about a child's development.

As the Family Day Home Provider,

I...

- Try to create a safe, friendly environment for the children in my care.
- Try to build a trusting relationship with the children in my care.
- Become involved in children's free play to encourage their use of new vocabulary and present new challenges when children are ready.
- Try to expand children's speech by using whole sentences and descriptive words whenever possible.
- Act as a literacy role model (e.g. write notes and cards, post lists, keep a calendar, etc.)
- Become more knowledgeable about early language and literacy development through training.



Creating a Literacy-rich Environment in Family Day Homes¹



www.nwtliteracy.ca



Adapted from Get Ready to Read!, a project of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. www.GetReadytoRead.org.

Early child care providers are very important people when it comes to children's literacy development. This checklist will help you, as a day home operator, to think about how you support literacy development in your day home at present. It will also give you some ideas on ways to improve that support.

For more information on early literacy, contact us at Phone: (867) 873-9262, Toll Free: 1-866-599-6758, or nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca

What Learning Resources Do You Have in Your Family Day Home?

I have...

- Plastic or wooden alphabet letters to help children learn the names and shapes of the letters.
- Crayons, markers, pencils and paper so that children can write and draw at any time.
- Round-tipped children's scissors to develop fine motor skills.
- Play dough and other similar materials to develop fine motor skills.
- A variety of materials to encourage free play, such as dress-up clothes, dolls, empty boxes and other toys.
- Materials for free play that have print on them, such as empty cereal boxes, packages, labels and pretend money.
- A calendar with the day home schedule and special events so that children see how they can get information from everyday print.
- Containers for crayons, blocks or other toys to help children organize materials.

What Kinds of Books Do You Have in Your Family Day Home?

I have...

- A selection of picture books, especially ones with northern themes and authors.
- Books with large print, colorful pictures and photos.
- A range of age-appropriate books.
- Books in places where children can easily reach them.
- Books from my local library so that children see a variety of books.
- A way to change things up. (e.g. I regularly rotate the books I have so that children see books they haven't seen before, as well as old favorites.)



What Oral Language Activities Do You Do in Your Family Day Home?

I...

- Talk to children every day and encourage them to talk to others.
- Use songs and rhymes to encourage children to play with language and learn the rhythm of the language.
- Use felt stories and puppets to encourage oral language.
- Introduce new ideas and vocabulary informally throughout the day.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage children to talk about their day, (e.g. "What did you do at the park today?" or "What colours and shapes did we see on our walk?")
- Use pictures and photos to help children talk about what they see.
- Encourage children to tell me stories.
- Help children learn the sounds that letters from the alphabet make (e.g. "M makes the 'mmmm' sound.>").
- Use words to resolve conflicts and think through problems.
- Take children outside to hear and see language use in real life.



What Reading Activities Do You Do in Your Family Day Home?

I...

- Allow lots of time for free reading (even if children are only looking at the pictures).
- Encourage children to hold books and turn the pages themselves (even if the book is upside down).
- Introduce new words and their meanings when I read picture books to children or engage them in group activities.
- Read to the children as a whole group or in small groups every day.
- Read books that include rhymes, finger plays, repetition and predictable text so that children can read along with me.
- Encourage children to follow directions or instructions as a group to learn how to use everyday text (e.g. follow a map to get to the library, follow a recipe to make cookies).
- Include early language and literacy experiences during projects and trips through the year (e.g. visit the library, read labels at the grocery store, notice signs during a walk).
- Let parents borrow books or storybooks to read to their children at home.