

What Works for Third Grade Reading

NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Working Paper

Reading with Children: Supported and Supportive Families and Communities

Table of Contents

- I. Pathways Measure of Success**
- II. Definitions**
- III. Reading with Children: Why It Matters**
- IV. Reading with Children: Connections to Other Pathways Measures of Success**
- V. Context Matters: Reading with Children**
- VI. Policy Options to Advance Reading with Children**
 - A Comprehensive Strategy to Promote Emergent Literacy
 - A Research to Policy Partnership on Using Technology to Support Early Literacy
- VII. Evidence-Informed and Promising Practice Options to Promote Reading with Children**
 - Reading in a Family's Native Language
 - Focusing on Teacher/Child Interactions
 - Engaging in Dialogic Reading
- VIII. Evidence-Informed and Promising Program Options to Promote Reading with Children**
 - Abriendo Puertas: Opening Doors Parenting Program
 - Reach Out and Read
 - Thirty Million Words
 - Parents as Teachers (PAT)
 - Motherread

Appendix A. National Governor's Association Report: Examples of State and Local Action

Appendix B. The Boston Basics

I. Pathways Measure of Success

Average number of days per week that parents read to their children

II. Definitions

The following terms are referenced in this brief:

Dialogic Reading is an interactive way to read picture books with young children. The adult and child take turns telling the story and describing what they see. The adult actively listens to the child and assists by asking questions and adding detail.ⁱ

Dual Language Learners (DLL) are children who are either learning more than one language at a time or who, while learning a second language, continue to develop their home languages. Other terms for students who are dual language learners are Limited English Proficient (LEP), bilingual, English language learners (ELL), English learners, and children who speak a language other than English (LOTE).ⁱⁱ

Emergent Literacy is an early stage of children’s literacy development. Emergent literacy includes phonemic awareness (the understanding that words are made of units of sound and the ability to identify and manipulate those sounds), concepts of print and story and reading styles.ⁱⁱⁱ

Family Literacy involves children and their families learning together. It can be used to describe parent-child strategies that promote young children’s literacy development, and programs that aim to improve literacy skills in more than one member of the family.^{iv}

III. Reading with Children: Why It Matters

Reading regularly with a caregiver improves young children’s language development, early reading achievement, and school readiness. When adults read with young children and engage them in rich conversations, children develop larger vocabularies, learn to read more easily, and grow stronger emotionally. Early language and literacy develop at the same time, beginning at birth, with both visual and vocal exchanges between a child and caregiver.^v “What children learn from listening and talking contributes to their ability to read and write, and vice versa.”^{vi}

Having books in the home improves children’s reading performance, helps them learn the basics of reading, results in children reading more and for longer periods of time, and improves children’s attitudes toward reading and learning.^{vii} Children’s vocabulary benefits from hearing and engaging with varied and complex words. Picture books are a rich source of diverse word choices.^{viii} Children who have books in their homes and are read to during the first years of life are more likely to have higher literacy skills in kindergarten.^{ix}

Whether their parents read to them nearly every day is a factor that predicts whether young children will become frequent readers in the middle school years. Frequent readers read books for fun five to seven days a week. Among children ages six through 11 years, frequent readers read twice as many books as those children who read less often.^x

IV. Reading with Children: Connections to Other Pathways Measures of Success

Just like the domains of child development, the Pathways Measures of Success are highly interconnected. The table and text below outline the measures that *influence* or *are influenced by* Reading with Children.

Health and Development on Track, Beginning at Birth	Supported and Supportive Families and Communities	High Quality Birth-through-age-Eight Learning Environments with Regular Attendance
Social-Emotional Health	Formal and Informal Family Supports	High Quality Birth-through-age-Eight Early Care and Education
	Safe at Home	Promotion to Next Grade
	Positive Parent-Child Interactions	Summer Learning

Social-Emotional Health

When adults read to young children and engage them in rich conversations, children develop larger vocabularies, learn to read more easily, and grow stronger emotionally.^{xi}

Formal and Informal Family Supports, Safe at Home and Positive Parent-Child Interactions

Reading with children depends on willing and able parents who have the internal and external resources to use books as a form of engagement with their children. Toxic levels of family stress, unstable housing and homelessness, and the risk of violence in the home can impair parents' capacity to read regularly with their young children.^{xii} Families struggling with high levels of adversity, including poverty, experience barriers to reading with their young children.^{xiii} These barriers include the absence of books in the home (or shelter) environment,^{xiv} limited access to trusted professionals,^{xv} and the lack of basic knowledge about how very young children benefit from reading with their parents.^{xvi} Barriers can also include such challenges as parental depression^{xvii} which negatively impacts parent-child interaction. When parents are depressed or anxious, they are less likely to read to their children or to engage in a rich language exchange with their children about the books they are reading together.^{xviii}

High Quality Birth-through-age-Eight Early Care and Education

Early care and education teachers and providers are expected to support the language and literacy development of the young children in their care, to build the core skills of early reading. Working with parents, high quality early learning providers focus on vocabulary development, storytelling skills, phonological and print awareness, letter knowledge and creating a love for books.^{xix}

Promotion to Next Grade

Retention in early grades is often due to an inability to read proficiently.^{xx} Regular parental reading supports young children's language development, early reading achievement, and school readiness.^{xxi}

Summer Learning

Children’s reading success depends, in part, on the value that parents place on literacy. Parents who are offered concrete, specific suggestions about continued family literacy can provide vital reading support to their children over the summer when significant learning loss occurs.^{xxii}

V. Context Matters: Reading with Children

The following issues are important to consider when planning policy, practice and program strategies to address Reading with Children.

Group Differences in Reading to Young Children. Findings from a variety of sources – including the Children’s Literacy Foundation,^{xxiii} Child Trends,^{xxiv} Reading is Fundamental^{xxv} and a very recent survey by Scholastic^{xxvi} – reveal consistent trends in family reading behavior by family income, race/ethnicity, and children’s age.

Family Income. Children growing up in lower-income families are read to less often, have access to a much smaller number of children’s books in their homes, develop dramatically smaller vocabularies in the early years, and have parents who read less often themselves.^{xxvii} The extent that parents have been told about the importance of reading aloud to their children at birth may also contribute to group differences in parental reading behavior. While more than 74 percent of high-income parents with children under age six report having received advice that children should be read aloud to from birth, just 47 percent of parents in the lowest-income families report having received this information.^{xxviii}

Race/Ethnicity. Nationally, as well as in North Carolina, data collected within the past five years reveals that a lower percentage of Hispanic parents report reading to their children every day than do white non-Hispanic and black non-Hispanic parents. More white parents than black parents report reading to their children every day.^{xxix} Reading books that include characters “who look like me” is important to young children.^{xxx}

Percent of parents who report reading to their children every day, by race and ethnicity ^{xxxi}			
	Hispanic (includes all children reporting Hispanic/Latino origin)	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
Nationwide	29%	43%	59%
North Carolina	24%	30%	53%

Age. For many parents, reading with children begins early. In a recent Scholastic survey, 30 percent of parents with children birth to five years old report that they began reading before their child was three months old. Three-quarters report that they started reading aloud to their child before the age of one year. Those reading experiences change as children age, however. The survey found that while over half of parents of 0-2 year olds, and 63 percent of parents of 3-5 year olds read aloud to their children 5-7 days a week, the numbers drop significantly as children get older. Only 38 percent of parents of 6-8 year olds and 17 percent of parents of 9-11 year olds report reading aloud to their children 5-7 times a week.^{xxxii}

Technology as an Aid to Reading with Children. Many parents now use technology devices to engage their children with words, sounds and pictures. The quality and structure of these technology tools –

along with the ways in which parents engage with the technology and with their children – may help or hinder children’s natural engagement with text and the reading process.^{xxxiii}

Nine in ten parents report that by age two their children are watching various forms of media, and by age three, nearly one-third of children have televisions in their bedrooms. When parents believe that games, apps, and videos have educational value for their children, they are twice as likely to make them available.^{xxxiv} For very young children, however, solo media use can take up necessary unstructured play time essential to cognitive development, and research shows no learning gain from use of the media at this age.

When parents and young children use technology together, however, growth in children’s language skills increases.^{xxxv} In 1999, the American Academy of Pediatrics advised parents not to provide children under age two with any screen-based technology. In 2016, the Academy revised this position and now advises parents who want their young children to use technology to sit and engage with them. Emerging research shows that children as young as 15 months can learn new vocabulary from technology if parents are sitting next to them, reading the words and talking interactively with them.^{xxxvi}

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services published a set of four guidelines in 2016 for the use of technology with children. Text below is cited directly from the report.

- Technology—when used appropriately—can be a tool for learning.
- Technology should be used to increase access to learning opportunities for all children.
- Technology may be used to strengthen relationships among parents, families, early educators, and young children.
- Technology is more effective for learning when adults and peers interact or co-view with young children.^{xxxvii}

In addition, smart phone apps for the parents of young children have been shown to advance children’s literacy and school readiness, including *Text4Baby*, a free smart phone app hosted by Zero to Three that pushes information to new mothers signed up for the service.^{xxxviii} *Tips by Text* and *Ready4K* are Stanford University applications shown to improve preschool literacy^{xxxix} and school readiness.^{xl}

VI. Policy Options to Advance Reading with Children

A Comprehensive Strategy to Promote Emergent Literacy. *Develop a comprehensive emergent literacy policy focused on the first three years of children’s lives.*

A comprehensive emergent literacy policy would incorporate findings from brain science about young children’s language development and best practices in family engagement. The policy would support investments in evidence-informed programs – both universal programs and those targeted to at-risk children. This effort could be led by the governor and the North Carolina business community.

The North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development can serve as a core tool in creating a comprehensive emergent literacy policy. The Language Development and Communication domain in the Foundations provides standards and goals specific to three areas of early language development and communication: learning to communicate, foundations for reading, and foundations for writing.^{xli} Each

of these goal areas also includes developmental indicators for infants, younger toddlers, older toddlers, young preschoolers, and older preschoolers, along with strategies for parents and primary caregivers.^{xlii}

The literature on shared reading experiences reveals a moderate gain in several elements of young children's emergent literacy. States can support efforts to engage parents and caregivers in rich language exchange as part of the process of reading to children.^{xliii} Studies of dialogic reading, a shared reading experience reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse, reveal positive effects on young children's oral language.^{xliiv}

The National Governors Association (NGA) has proposed five strategies to improve young children's third grade reading proficiency. Four of these strategies include establishing early literacy learning standards, expanding access to high quality early education settings, providing literacy-specific training to the early education workforce, and improving accountability for literacy outcomes.

The fifth strategy highlights the role of parents as they engage with their children to promote emergent literacy.^{xliv} Specifically, the NGA recommends that states:

- Incorporate parent engagement in existing early care and education and K-3 policies, practices, and intervention planning
- Invest in programs that increase parents' capacity to build their children's language and literacy skills. These could include home visiting programs, public-private partnerships to promote parent-child book reading and build home libraries, and early literacy campaigns targeting parents.^{xlvi}

See Appendix A for a chart of state and local examples of action in these areas highlighted in the 2013 NGA report.

A Research to Policy Partnership on Using Technology to Support Early Literacy. *Identify partners from the research community, business, government, early childhood organizations and parent groups to establish a new public-private Technology and Emerging Literacy partnership.*

The goal of the partnership would be to examine, test, and report on technology tools, process, and applications that impact young children's literacy. This research would also focus on the use of technology to promote parental behaviors that support children's early literacy.

There are several national organizations focused on using technology to improve early literacy. These organizations could be partners in North Carolina's work. A few examples include:

- **Bridging the Word Gap Network.** This network includes more than 100 researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and funders who have come together to address the 30 million-word gap between children of higher- versus lower-income families. The goal of the network is to reduce the number of children who enter kindergarten with language and literacy delays. The network includes seven workgroups, each of which has a research agenda:
 - Interventions aimed at parents
 - Interventions for non-parent caregivers and child care
 - Pediatric and public health care setting interventions
 - Identifying how family context may affect the implementation language-promoting interventions

- Interventions for children who are dual language learners
 - Population- and community-level interventions
 - Learning what analytic methods, designs and measurement approaches work best to advance early literacy.^{xlvii}
- **Tap, Click and Read.** This effort, supported by the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, was launched in 2015 with the book *Tap, Click and Read* to promote the use of effective technology in early literacy development. It includes videos showing successful implementation in communities, along with other print and multi-media resources to help encourage early learning and literacy among families and communities.^{xlviii}

The initiative also developed *Integrating Technology into Early Learning*, an interactive mapping tool that identifies organizations around the nation that are integrating technology into early literacy programs. Programs are grouped into five categories: professional learning, parent engagement/home visiting, center or school sites, library or museum sites, and public media partnerships. For each program listed, the map provides evidence of program impact, children served by age, and the primary technology tool employed.^{xlix} No initiatives are listed for North Carolina.

- **Boston Basics.** Launched in January 2016 as part of the Harvard Achievement Gap initiative, the *Boston Basics Campaign* is a science-informed set of five videos designed to promote more positive, intentional, everyday parent-child interactions.ⁱ Each video presents one of the five basic principles. Each principle includes tips for parents of infants from birth to 12 months and toddlers from 18 months to three years. The principles—Maximize love, minimize stress; Talk, sing and point; Count, group and compare; Explore through movement and play; and Read and discuss stories—are described in greater detail in Appendix B.

The short, culturally-appropriate videos are available for free on the initiative’s website in English and Spanish, with other languages in development. The aim of the developers is to create universal access to the videos. An evaluation on the initiative’s outcomes is being designed through academic partners and a broad national advisory group. A learning consortium of cities across America where *The Basics* are being implemented includes California, New York, Texas, Tennessee, Connecticut, and South Carolina.ⁱⁱ

- **Reading Rockets: Launching New Readers** is a public television series designed to engage parents, caregivers and teachers in developing their children’s literacy. The series consists of 30-minute television programs, parent tips by grade level, and additional resources. Reading Rockets is funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs and operates in partnership with the Public Broadcasting System.ⁱⁱⁱ While this initiative is designed to promote reading behavior among all children, its special focus is on reading interventions for struggling young readers.

VII. Evidence-Informed and Promising Practice Options to Advance Reading with Children

Reading in a Family's Native Language

While many children of non-English-speaking families gain exposure to English through enrollment in child care and early education, Hispanic families enroll their children in early education at much lower levels than other groups of parents.^{liii} This means that encouraging parent-child reading experiences in the early years—whatever the language—is very important to young children's development and school readiness.

Encouraging families to read books in their native languages and bilingual books expand caregivers' opportunities to read with their children.^{liv} Engaging in story-telling; reading wordless books; using rhymes, songs and chants in parent-child interactions; watching television together; and going together to the library are other practices that build a family reading environment for all children. These activities are especially important for families where English is not the primary language or where parents are not comfortable readers of English.^{lv}

Children who maintain fluency in their native languages are more likely to feel good about their heritage.^{lvi} Dual-language young children also can quickly shift their attention and switch tasks, which help build executive function. By age three, some social-emotional skills are better developed in dual-language children than in their peers.^{lvii}

North Carolina leads the nation in the steady growth of dual-language immersion programs in public schools. This growth has been driven by strong demand by parents and because the method has shown promise for increasing achievement for students who are still learning English. To date, each of North Carolina's 115 school districts has established one or more dual-language immersion programs.^{lviii} Research results from the 2009-2010 evaluation study reveal that students in these programs make greater math and reading gains than students in non-dual language classrooms.^{lix}

Focusing on Teacher/Child Interactions

More than Baby Talk, created by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina, supports infants and toddlers' language and communication development, with a focus on teacher-child interactions. As with parent-child interactions, interaction between children and their teachers builds children's language and communication skills. *More Than Baby Talk: 10 Ways to Promote the Language and Communication Skills of Infants and Toddlers* describes ten science-informed practices that early childhood teachers can use to promote early language and communication skills.^{lx} Review of the practice suggests it is relevant to reading by parents and others, as well.

Engaging in Dialogic Reading

Dialogic reading is an evidence-based practice that promotes the language skills of young children through instruction for parents.^{lxi} It has been shown to be one of the most effective reading practices to promote early literacy skills.^{lxii} The instructional video *Hear and Say Reading with Toddlers* explains dialogic reading to parents and early childhood educators and encourages prompting children with

questions while reading to them. Evaluation, based on parent-child reading before and after instruction, revealed significant improvements in reading style.^{lxiii}

VIII. Evidence-Informed and Promising Program Options to Advance Reading with Children

Abriendo Puertas: Opening Doors Parenting Program

Abriendo Puertas is one of the largest programs in the nation working with Hispanic parents of preschool-aged children to foster children’s learning and development, parent leadership, and advocacy. Over the past decade, over 400 family service organizations across 34 states have served over 30,000 low-income parents/families through the program.

A rigorous evaluation by Child Trends—the first random-assignment evaluation of a culturally-relevant parenting program serving Latino children—revealed that, with relatively few resources, Abriendo Puertas significantly improved core parenting behaviors associated with academic success, including:^{lxiv}

- Education activities by parents at home, including reviewing the letters of the alphabet and reading to children more frequently
- Employing a research-informed reading approach, including stopping from time to time to talk about the story with the child, and reading with an expressive and enthusiastic voice
- Using the library to take books home
- Understanding the importance of child care providers reading with children every day
- Making time to respond to children’s behavior
- Becoming mindful of how their behaviors as parents influence their young children^{lxv}

Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is an evidence-based program used in primary care offices to promote early literacy. During children’s well-child visits, pediatricians encourage parents to read to their children, volunteers model shared book reading, and each child receives a new book appropriate to his or her age. Research reveals that participation in the program by low-income parents makes families more focused on reading, results in higher vocabulary scores among older children, and increases the amount the family members read each week. Children ages six months to five years are eligible to participate in Reach Out and Read, and nationwide, 3.8 million children are served in 4,500 sites.

Reach Out and Read programs operate in the following North Carolina Counties: Alamance, Alexander, Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Carteret, Catawba, Chatham, Chowan, Clay, Cleveland, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Dare, Davidson, Davie, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Graham, Granville, Guilford, Haywood, Henderson, Hartford, Hoke, Hyde, Iredell, Jackson, Johnston, Lee, Lenoir, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Moore, Nash, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Pamlico, Perquimans, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Rowan, Scotland, Surrey, Swain, Transylvania, Wake, Warren, Washington, Watauga, Wayne, Wilkes, Wilson, and Yadkin.

Thirty Million Words (TMW)

Thirty Million Words® is designed use parents’ language to help build their children’s brains. The TMW curriculum combines education and technology in a multimedia platform. The education component presents accessible and easy-to-understand concepts about language and reading, animated as part of a video of parent-child interaction. On the technology side, a word pedometer records parents’ conversations with their children weekly so that parents can monitor the amount and type of language that their children are hearing.^{lxvi} Based on the results of a randomized control trial in Chicago, parents receiving the TMW intervention significantly increased their talk and interaction with their children.^{lxvii} We include this as a promise initiative, although much more research is needed.

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based^{lxviii} early childhood parent education program focused on positive child development. PAT is delivered in monthly home visits and group meetings. PAT uses trained parent educators to work with families with very young children (not yet in school) until the children enter kindergarten. Random-assignment evaluations reveal that PAT is effective in increasing parenting knowledge and their engagement in reading activities with their children.^{lxix}

North Carolina Parents as Teachers. The NC PAT website is “under development.” However, a full listing of NC PAT community programs in North Carolina obtained from the national website follows.^{lxx}

County	Program
Burke	Parents As Teachers/Burke County Public Schools
Davidson	School Readiness Program -P.A.T./Davidson County Partnership for Children
Forsyth	Imprints Cares
Granville	Granville Co Schools/Cradle to Class/Granville County Schools
Guilford	Parents as Teachers Guilford County
Harnett	Harnett County Parents as Teachers/Harnett County Cooperative Extension Service
Hertford	Ahoskie Parents as Teachers
Hoke	Hoke County Parents as Teachers/Hoke County Cooperative Extension
Iredell	Iredell County Partnership for Young Children/Family Support PAT
Jackson	Region A Partnership for Children/ Silva
Lee	The Coalition For Families in Lee County/Lee County Partnership for Children
Lenoir	Parents as Teachers/Lenoir Cooperative Extension Service
Person	Very Important Parents of Person County/Person County Cooperative Extension
Robeson	Parents as Teachers/Robeson County Health Department
Rockingham	Smart Start - P.A.T./Rockingham County Partnership for Children
Sampson	Sampson County Partnership for Children
Surry	The Children's Center
Wake	Project Enlightenment PAT/Wake County Public Schools
Wayne	Wayne County Parents as Teachers/Partnership for Children of Wayne County

Motheread

Founded in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1996, Motheread is an international child literacy training and curriculum development program that works to build knowledge and skills in support of early reading. The program now operates in 31 states. Examples from the following states are included on the website: Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Washington.^{lxxi} Research reported on the initiative's website indicates that core components of Mothehread increase parental knowledge of emergent literacy. Preschool aged children whose teachers have been trained and coached in the story telling component of Motheread reveal greater improvements in expressive language than do children whose teachers did not receive training.^{lxxii} We include this intervention as a promising practice.

In North Carolina, training is conducted in partnership with community colleges, Communities In Schools, Early Head Start, Head Start, libraries, North Carolina Partnership with Children (Smart Start), public schools, and Title I programs. In addition, Motheread has partnered with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety to provide classes to incarcerated mothers and with the North Carolina Community College System to support English-language civics classes. Motheread and Wake County Smart Start have partnered for two decades to work with child-care providers through the *Literacy Invites and Nurtures Kids' Success* (LINKS) program.^{lxxiii}

Appendix A. **National Governor’s Association Report: Examples of State and Local Action**

Note: This report includes five strategies. Only the strategy focused on increasing parents’ capacity to build their children’s language and literacy skills is included here. Text included is cited directly from the referenced source.

A Governor’s Guide to Early Literacy, National Governors Association, October 2013	
NGA Early Literacy Guidance	Federal, State and Local Examples
1.a Make Home Visiting Program Investments at the Federal, State and Local Levels	<p>Policy makers may employ the federal multi-billion dollar MIECHV home visiting and target the expansion of evidence-based home visiting models that focus on helping parents to develop the skills and knowledge to support their children’s language and literacy development.</p> <p><i>North Carolina’s Transformation Zone</i> strategy targets high-need, rural counties with interventions such as the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) along with Motherread/Fatheread and Reach Out and Read to help parents and community members support children’s literacy development.</p> <p><i>Providence Talks</i>, an innovative pilot in Providence, Rhode Island, funded through a \$5 million innovation prize from the Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Mayors Challenge, will record daily parent–child verbal interactions to inform monthly coaching sessions conducted by home visitors.</p> <p>In rural Maine, <i>Comienza en Casa</i> (It Starts at Home) connects immigrant families with home visitors who bring learning materials, including toys, art supplies, and iPads loaded with apps and i-Books. The visitor leads learning sessions, in English or Spanish, giving parents new ideas for on- and off-screen learning activities, and approaches that merge the two.</p>
1.b Create Literacy-Specific Public/Private Partnerships to Distribute Books	<p>The <i>Washington</i> Department of Early Learning and Thrive by Five partnered with Reach Out and Read to expand access to books for new parents as part of the developmental screening process and well-baby visits.</p> <p><i>Massachusetts</i> established a public-private partnership with IBM to provide computers and software to adult education programs to help strengthen parents’ and family members’ language and literacy skills and give them tools to support their children’s reading and language development.</p> <p>State officials in <i>Boston</i> have engaged the Boston Children’s Museum, the local PBS station, and the state library association to give families and library and museum professionals the skills and tools they need to support early literacy development.</p>
1.c Invest in Public Awareness, Knowledge and Skill-	<p><i>Washington</i> developed “Love, Talk, Play,” which provides everyday family activities that are aligned with the state’s B-3rd early learning standards. The campaign provides information to families through regional early learning coalitions, a website with informational videos and materials, an email</p>

<p>Building Campaigns that Target Parents</p>	<p>service, and social media. The standards are written in accessible language and include activities that parents can do with children to promote their language and literacy skills and support their physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.</p> <p><i>The Boston Basics</i>, a science-informed online set of videos for parents of young children, has brought 50 partners to the table, including researchers from the Harvard Kennedy School, medical professionals, black philanthropists and public television, to provide the free multi-media resources to families. Boston Basics is being customized for use in other places, including California, Texas, Tennessee, New York, Connecticut, and South Carolina.</p>
<p>2.a Integrate Parent Engagement into Early Education</p>	<p><i>New York's</i> Early Care and Education's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) specifies family engagement standards related to regular, ongoing communication with families, family involvement and support, and transitions. They also acknowledge the importance of supporting children and families in their home languages.</p> <p><i>Colorado's</i> QRIS requires programs to use a family questionnaire to collect information about children's activities, interests, and behavior at home and the parents' goals for their children. ECE programs are evaluated on the extent to which they provide parents with information about their children's progress, family education and support services, and opportunities to give feedback.</p> <p><i>New Jersey</i> requires districts to provide support for ongoing and year-round transition practices with families to increase parent engagement.</p> <p><i>Delaware</i> is piloting a statewide family questionnaire at kindergarten entry to inform decisions by teachers, schools, districts, and the state. In addition, the state is planning to train teachers to share the results of the forthcoming Kindergarten Entry Assessment and collaborate with families to develop goals for their children.</p> <p>In <i>Washington</i>, kindergarten teachers meet with parents of all incoming students to discuss their children's strengths and challenges. This information is used as part of the kindergarten entry assessment process.</p>

Appendix B. The Boston Basics

The Boston Basics is included as an example of the use of technology to support and encourage intentional interactions with young children, including reading. It has not yet been evaluated. The five Boston Basics principles are presented below. Each principle can be accessed at no cost online and includes a short, culturally respectful video and tips for parents based on the ages of their children, between birth and age three. The text that follows is cited directly from the website of The Boston Basics.

Maximize Love, Manage Stress. Infants thrive when their world seems loving, safe, and predictable. When you express love and respond to their needs, you teach them that they can count on you. Over time, showing love and responding helps them learn to manage their feelings and behavior. As they grow, feeling secure in their relationships gives them the confidence they need to explore, learn, and take on life’s challenges. Young children are affected by your emotions, both good and bad. So, it is important to find strategies that help you cope with stress. Caring for yourself benefits your child.^{lxxiv}

Talk, Sing and Point. Babies are learning language from the moment they are born. At first, to a newborn baby, speech is just sound. Then, day by day, they learn that the sounds have meaning. This process depends on how much people talk to them. Every time you talk, sing, or point to what you are talking about, you provide clues to the meaning of what you are saying. You are providing important information to their brains about how language works. As your child develops, talking with them and answering their questions is a way to teach them about the world. By talking with them, you will also get to know the fascinating person they are becoming!^{lxxv}

Count, Group and Compare. Becoming good at math begins long before a child enters school. Even infants are wired to learn simple math ideas, including small numbers, patterns, and making comparisons. You don’t need to be a math teacher to start preparing your child to be a problem solver. There are fun and simple activities that you can do now to build math and thinking skills. Watch the video to see the everyday ways that families from Boston count, group, and compare.^{lxxvi}

Explore through Movement and Play. Movement and play are good for children’s bodies—their coordination, strength, and overall health. They are also ways that children explore and learn about the world. Newborns don’t have much control over their bodies. Each stage of development comes with new opportunities for leaning. For example, an infant might explore by touching, grasping, chewing, or crawling. A toddler might explore by walking or climbing. Young children are like scientists—curious and excited to explore their surroundings. See where your child’s curiosity takes them. The more you pay attention, the more you will learn about the person they are becoming.^{lxxvii}

Read and Discuss Stories. The more we read with young children, the more prepared they become to enjoy reading and to do well in school. It is never too early to begin reading! Stories expose children to words and ideas that they would not otherwise experience. Books teach children to use their imaginations. What they learn about people, places, and things can be important building blocks to later life success. For both parents and children, times together with books form fond and lasting memories.^{lxxviii}

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