

Why it's important to boost baby's vocabulary now

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(HealthDay)—We know that early learning can set up a child for

success. A study done by researchers at Penn State University found out just how early that learning should start—by age 2.

For this study, parents filled out surveys about how many words their 2-year-olds knew, and then the researchers checked in with them three years later when their children were in kindergarten. The toddlers with a large vocabulary were more likely to start kindergarten ready to read and learn math. It turned out that they also paid more attention in class and were better behaved. This may also be why some kids do better than others in school.

Building that vocabulary stems from very early and frequent interactions with mom and dad. It takes only simple things to engage baby, such as talking and reading. In fact, it's hard to overstress the importance of reading to babies. A separate [study](#) done at the University of Iowa found that [babies](#) respond more to reading than to even toy- or puppet-play and, in turn, learn more from it.

A very young baby may only babble in response to hearing your voice as you read, but when you respond back by repeating or expanding on his or her sound or offering a word with that sound, this back-and-forth interaction helps with [language development](#).

Another important difference maker for a child's early development is to read books with bright pictures and simple sentences rather than single words. Be engaged as you to read so that baby will develop not only a great [vocabulary](#), but also a love for books that will serve him or her well throughout life.

More information: The organization Reading Rockets has great tips on [reading to babies](#).

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