

Did you know... ?

Children love to sing, and when they play with words, as well as the smaller sounds in words, they are developing an early literacy skill called **phonological awareness**. Recognizing when words rhyme and hearing the beginning sounds of words are things that help children learn to read later on.

A common reason grown-ups don't sing with children is that they don't think they have a good singing voice. But young children don't really know a good singing voice from a bad one; they just want you to sing with them! It is helpful to slow songs down when you're singing with children so they can hear the letter sounds and words more clearly.

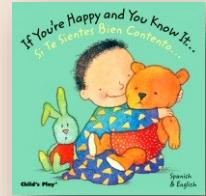
For more information about how you can develop phonological awareness visit:
phonologicalawareness.org

Here's how...

- ★ Make up your own nonsense words and silly songs.
- ★ Sing songs with your child every day. Songs break words into syllables and are a fun way to learn about word sounds. In most songs, each syllable in a word gets a different note.
- ★ Add actions, such as clapping or bouncing, as you sing a song or say a poem.
- ★ Say rhymes and sing songs in the language most comfortable for you.
- ★ Listen to music CDs as you travel in the car. Play a variety of music, as well as children's traditional songs.

Read

If You're Happy and You Know It.../ Si te sientes bien contento..., illustrated by Annie Kubler



Singing songs and rhymes is the perfect way to bond with your baby and share quality time. It also develops language by introducing them to the natural sounds and patterns of speech. Combining these with actions stimulates the brain and helps muscle development. Sing and play with your baby or toddler every day!

This version of "If You're Happy and You Know It" changes the words to activities toddlers like to do. To hear the original version of the song see Page 2.

Other books in this series:



Choosing Books

More books to sing with your child...

The Itsy Bitsy Spider, illustrated by Rosemary Wells

The More We Get Together, adapted by Caroline Jayne Church

One Love, by Cedella Marley

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed, by Eileen Christelow

You Are My Sunshine, adapted by Jimmie Davis

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, by Iza Trapani

Talk



Toddlers are fascinated by whispering, and it takes some practice for them to be able to do it. Help your child learn to control the level of volume in their voice by having your child mimic you saying a phrase using a “loud” or “big” voice, a “regular” voice, a “soft” or “little” voice, and then a whisper. Then use your whisper voices to give each other commands such as “clap your hands,” or “twirl,” or “hug teddy.” Do this often so your child can have lots of practice. If you have a baby you can use your whisper voice as you talk to her throughout the day.

Sing



If You're Happy and You Know It (original version)

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (*clap clap*)

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (*clap clap*)

If you're happy and you know it, then you really ought to show it.

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (*clap clap*)

Additional verses:

If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (*stomp stomp*)

If you're happy and you know it, shout hooray! (*hooray!*)

If you're happy and you know it, do all three! (*clap clap, stomp stomp, hooray!*)

Hear song at [www.thelearninggroove.com/
if-youre-happy-and-you-know-it](http://www.thelearninggroove.com/if-youre-happy-and-you-know-it)

Write



Put a few rubber bands of different sizes around a thin box, container, or bread pan to create a guitar. Let your toddler use their fingers to strum the different rubber bands and make different sounds. It helps your toddler to use just one finger and strum a specific band. The thicker the rubber band, the less likely it will break. This activity helps with fine motor skills, hearing and listening, and vision development.



Play



Make more homemade instruments with your child and play along with your favorite songs:

Drum: coffee can with lid or oatmeal tub

Maracas (shakers): water bottles or juice cans filled about 1/3 full with rice or dry beans. Seal the top with paper and tape.

Tambourine: Put a small handful of dry beans inside two aluminum pie pans or sturdy paper plates. Seal together with duct tape and shake.

Rhythm sticks: Hit two wooden spoons or pencils together.

At your library...



Check at your library for CDs and DVDs of children's songs. You can find special holiday music or songs you can sing year-round!