

Did you know...



The theme for this summer's national reading program is Wellness, Fitness and Sports. Babies and toddlers don't participate in sports, but it's important for them to be healthy and active. Children's health and well-being affects how well they are able to learn and develop the skills they'll need to be successful in school.

Take time to go to the park and bring books with you for an outdoor storytime. Make reading bedtime stories before a family tradition and sing songs as you take walks around your neighborhood. Play games with your child so they learn to follow directions, take turns, and exercise their bodies.

There are a lot of great children's books with a food theme. Check some out from your local library as you talk about healthy eating with your child and try new foods. Be sure to sign your children up for summer reading at your library. Programs are free!

Keep busy and active this summer, and get "On Your Mark, Get Set, Read!"

Here's how...



A Word About Board Books

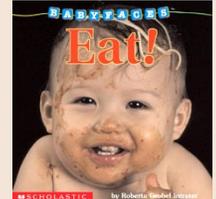
Babies explore their world by putting things into their mouths, including books! This is normal, and board books are made for little hands and mouths because they are harder to damage than other books. Pages of board books are sturdy, the pictures are simple and clear, and the designs are bright and fun. Clean board books with a little soap and water and wipe them dry. Store books where your baby or toddler can easily reach them on his or her own, such as a basket or low shelf.



Read

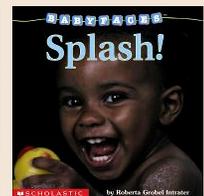
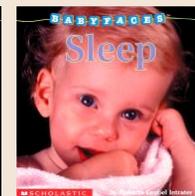
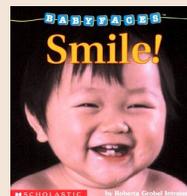


***Eat!* (Baby Face series), by Roberta Grobel Intrater**



This series of books uses photos of babies to show the things that are important in their lives. Babies love looking at pictures of other babies, and will enjoy reading this series of board books.

Other books in the award-winning Baby Faces series include *Smile!*, *Sleep*, *Splash!* and others. This series is also available in Spanish.



Choosing Books



More books about health and fitness...

Green Eggs and Ham, by Dr. Seuss

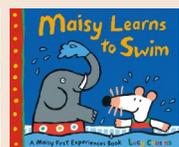
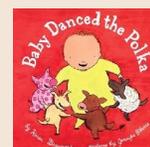
The Very Hungry Caterpillar, by Eric Carle

From Head to Toe, by Eric Carle

Spot Loves Sports, by Eric Hill

Maisy Learns to Swim, by Lucy Cousins

Baby Danced the Polka, by Karen Beaumont



Talk



Young children love to dump things out and put things back in containers. Make it a game by filling plastic containers with objects, such as small blocks, play food, plastic eggs, letter magnets, small cars, etc. Make sure the items aren't so small that your child could choke on them. Containers can be oatmeal or yogurt tubs, bowls, etc. Show your child how to dump out the objects and put them back in as you talk about the objects. "I'm putting the red block in the tub." This activity can be used for sorting, counting, labeling, and clean-up skills.



Write



Children need lots of practice to develop strong writing skills. It's fun to practice scribbling and drawing in food materials on a cookie sheet. Children can use their fingers to write in flour, pudding, or dry Jell-O. Messy but fun!

Play



Five Plump Peas

Five plump peas in a peapod pressed.

(press two fists together)

One grew, two grew, so did all the rest!

(fingers slowly pop up from fist)

They grew and they grew and did not stop,

(slowly move hands apart)

Until one day the pod went pop!

(bring hands together with a big clap)



Sing



Little Cheek

Safe, gentle touches are an important part of baby's bonding and building trust. Try this touching rhyme...

Little cheek, *(touch baby's cheek)*

Little chin, *(touch baby's chin)*

Here is where the food comes in.
(touch baby's mouth)

Little eyes, *(touch baby's eyes)*

Little nose, *(touch baby's nose)*

Now I'll kiss your little toes. *(kiss baby's toes)*

By Jackie Silberg

Adapted from *125 Brain Games for Babies*, by Jackie Silberg

At your library...



You can read hundreds of free online books with your child by visiting your local library's website and clicking on Tumblebooks™.

