



Supporting Family
Engagement To
Promote Literacy

Prekindergarten

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Provision of Abundant Reading Materials for Prekindergarten

A Resource for Educators



Introduction

This resource is intended to support educators in building family partnerships to enhance children’s literacy development at preschool and at home. The goal is for schools, child care providers, and families to effectively partner to engage children in literacy-based activities. By providing practical ideas and resources for families, schools and child care programs are better able to bridge literacy instruction from classrooms into homes, giving children more literacy opportunities in multiple contexts.

The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) General Education Leadership Network (GELN) Michigan Early Literacy Task Force (ELTF) created *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten* to improve children’s literacy.¹ The Michigan Department of Education endorses the use of the Essentials as quality, research-informed instructional practices. The evidence supporting the family literacy practices is informed by research that meets rigorous standards established by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) in classroom settings. These evidence-based classroom practices were adapted for home use; however, research has not investigated the efficacy of all of these practices in home contexts.

Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten includes guidance on the provision of abundant reading material. Having ample reading material includes having informational books (i.e., non-fiction books), poetry, environmental print, and storybooks (i.e., fiction books) accessible to children. Reading material should also include audiobooks and digital books. In addition to having an ample supply of reading material, it is important to have a literacy-rich environment. A literacy-rich environment includes books and other reading materials that are connected to the child’s interests and reflect the child’s cultural experiences. Teachers and families should provide comfortable places for children to look at books, and should engage in daily shared reading experiences to promote the child’s language and literacy development as part of a literacy-rich environment.²

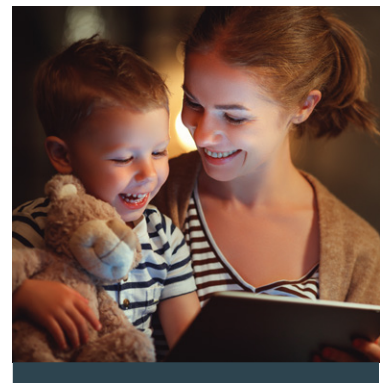
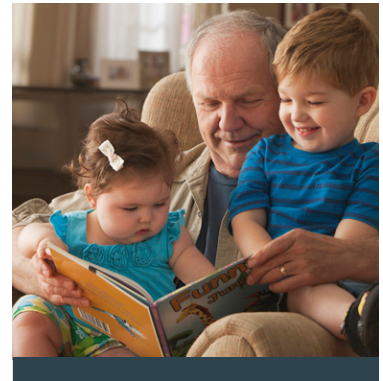


Sharing Why the Provision of Abundant Reading Materials Is an Essential Practice With Families

A recent study found that having an abundance of books and other reading material in the home encourages learning, and reading books helps children gain skills needed throughout their lives: growing up with books had positive effects on adult literacy, numeracy, and technological problem-solving skills.³

A home with an abundance of reading material makes as great of a difference on child outcomes as parent education. In other words, a home filled with books has the same effect on children as their parents' education. When a child grows up in a home filled with books, the child is steeped in an environment that supports learning. This affects the size of the child's vocabulary, attainment of general knowledge, imagination, creativity, comprehension, and so much more. Starting small and building a home library has huge payoffs for children. An abundance of books in the home means a child is growing up in a scholarly culture. A scholarly culture is the environment in a home in which there is an abundance of reading material, and those books are read, valued, and enjoyed.³

When families own a variety of reading material, children see the importance of reading in daily life. When children have access to an abundance of reading material, including print and digital materials, they will spend more time reading on their own and with adults.

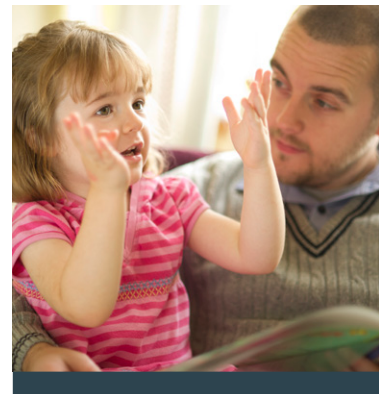


Supporting Families in the Essential Practice of Providing Ample Reading Materials and Opportunities

The *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten* also includes collaboration with families in promoting literacy. Schools and child care programs can partner with families to learn more about providing ample reading materials and opportunities at home. Teachers can share the “Provision of Abundant Reading Materials” infographic that accompanies this brief with families. The MiFamily Engagement Framework⁴ outlines several high-impact strategies that help support student achievement and family engagement, such as:

- Helping families secure library cards for their children;
- Sharing information about library book sales events;
- Providing books and other reading materials for children to take home;
- Inviting families into school or child care programs to borrow books and other reading materials;
- Conducting workshops for families with time to practice new literacy activities, get feedback, and ask questions;
- Holding family nights at local libraries to share information about how to select reading materials for and with their children; and
- Providing information to families on how to access free online reading resources and how to use environmental print to promote literacy development.

Schools can regularly partner with families to support children’s literacy learning, including in families’ efforts to build a rich home literacy environment.



Resources

The following resources provide more information about abundant reading materials and opportunities:

Educator Resources:

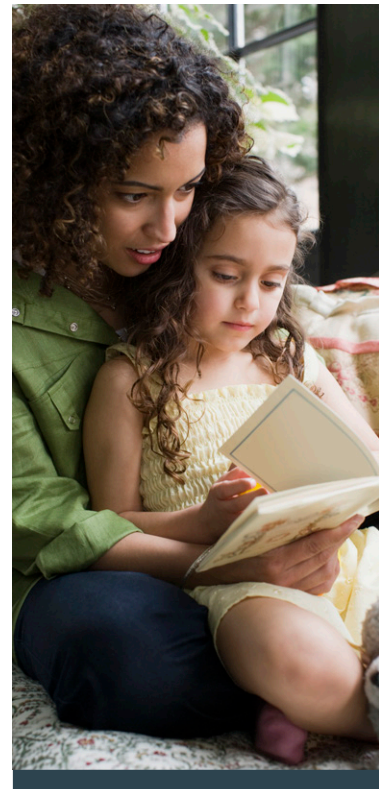
- [How To Build a Home Library](#)

Library Resources:

- [ILoveLibraries—for Parents](#)
- [List of Michigan’s Public Libraries by City](#)

Tips and Resources:

- [Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library](#)
- [Making Room for Literacy video](#)
- [Ensuring a “Print-Rich” Environment](#)



Endnotes

- ¹ Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, General Education Leadership Network, Early Literacy Task Force. (2016). *Essential instructional practices in early literacy: Prekindergarten*. https://literacyessentials.org/downloads/gelndocs/pre-k_literacy_essentials.pdf
- ² Johnson, D. (1999). *Critical issue: Addressing the literacy needs of emergent and early readers*. North Central Regional Education Lab.
- ³ Sikora, J., Evans, M. D. R., & Kelley, J. (2019). Scholarly culture: How books in adolescence enhance adult literacy, numeracy and technology skills in 31 societies. *Social Science Research*, 77, 1–15.
- ⁴ Michigan Department of Education. (2020). *MiFamily: Michigan's family engagement framework*. https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MIFamily_Family_Engagement_Framework_683447_7.pdf

Acknowledgments

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