

Birth to
Five

RESOURCES—INFANTS AND TODDLERS

ARTICLES

Bardige, B., & Bardige, M. K. (2008). Talk to me, baby! Supporting language development in the first 3 years. *Zero to Three*, 29(1), 4–10. Retrieved from http://main.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/29-1_Bardige.pdf?docID=6641

This article provides an overview of early language development and explains how talking with infants and toddlers promotes rich language acquisition. The authors offer strategies for supporting language development, including a focus on “parentese” (also known as infant-directed speech) and helping toddlers build vocabulary.

Gardner-Neblett, N., & Gallagher, K. C. (2013). *More than baby talk: 10 ways to promote the language and communication skills of infants and toddlers*. Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. Retrieved from http://mtbt.fpg.unc.edu/sites/mtbt.fpg.unc.edu/files/imce/documents/BabyTalk_WEB.pdf

This resource from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute describes 10 practices that early childhood educators can use to foster language and communication skills among infants and toddlers. Each practice includes a description, research evidence that supports it, and examples of how educators may use the practice with infants and toddlers. Practice number 3, “Mix It Up” relates specifically to using different types of words and grammar, and using more complex and varied language.

Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (2003). The early catastrophe: The 30 million word gap by age 3. *American Educator*, 27(1), 4–9. Retrieved from <http://www.aft.org/pdfs/americaneducator/spring2003/TheEarlyCatastrophe.pdf>

This article summarizes a longitudinal study on identifying features of children’s early home experiences that contribute to later language and cognitive development. Findings showed large differences in the amount and quality of children’s experiences with language and interactions by their third birthday, associated with family socio-economic levels.

Lockhart, S. (2013). Supporting communication, language, and literacy learning with infants and toddlers. *Extensions*, 26(3), 1–10. Retrieved from http://www.highscope.org/file/newsandinformation/extensions/extvol26no3_low.pdf

This article provides an overview of why infants and toddlers are motivated to communicate and learn language. It then focuses on the importance of their relationships with others in developing these capacities and two keys to language learning: children’s active learning through the senses and a vocabulary-rich environment. The article also talks about “child-directed speech” (also called “infant-directed speech”) and other language learning strategies.