The emphasis of this domain is on acquiring language and literacy for a variety of purposes. During the preschool period, children are learning to use language to communicate needs, interact socially with others, and share ideas, thoughts, and feelings. They are increasing both their spoken and written language abilities.

**Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children’s LISTENING:**

- Talk with children using language appropriate to their level of understanding
- Encourage children in conversation and notice and respond to what children say and do
- Use mealtimes and other daily routines as an opportunity for conversation
- Use rhymes and songs with children to increase children’s interest in language sounds and words
- Engage children in simple tasks that require an action or verbal response

**Strategies TEACHERS and CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children’s LISTENING:**

- Provide clear instructions that help children move from simple directions to a more complex sequence of directions
- Listen and respond to children’s attempts to communicate both verbally and non-verbally
- Model language for children using questions and facial expressions to communicate information
- Provide time and opportunities for children to have individual conversations with adults and other children
EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS*

Children show progress in **LISTENING** when they:

1. Understand non-verbal and verbal cues
2. Listen with understanding to stories, directions, and conversations
3. Follow directions that involve a two or three-step sequence of actions
4. Listen to and recognize different sounds in rhymes and familiar words

* These indicators apply to children in the preschool period of ages three to five. They are based on expectations for children approximately four years of age.

Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children’s **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children
- Support volunteer programs that increase the time adults spend with young children
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together
- Organize book donation drives for child care centers, Head Start, schools, and other early childhood programs

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children’s **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction
- Support small group sizes so teachers, caregivers, and children have opportunities for more individualized time together
- Provide support for libraries and books, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, and volunteer programs for facilitating literacy development
- Support adult and family literacy programs for the whole family
The emphasis of this domain is on acquiring language and literacy for a variety of purposes. During the preschool period, children are learning to use language to communicate needs, interact socially with others, and share ideas, thoughts, and feelings. They are increasing both their spoken and written language abilities.

**Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children’s SPEAKING:**

- Respond to children’s attempts to communicate using gestures, actions, or words
- Talk with children in home language and/or English and encourage children’s use of home language
- Encourage children to discuss and add to stories read to them
- Use language in everyday activities with children and talk about their actions, thoughts, and ideas
- Provide opportunities for children to talk and interact with other children and adults

**Strategies TEACHERS and CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children’s SPEAKING:**

- Respond to children’s attempts to communicate whether verbal or non-verbal
- Communicate with children using home language with interpreters when necessary
- Facilitate language development in home language and/or English (e.g., expand, extend, elaborate language)
- Talk about a variety of topics and illustrate ways to use language to ask questions, give answers, make statements, share ideas, or use pretend, fantasy, or word play
- Build on children’s interests by introducing new vocabulary and ideas
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in turn-taking and dialogue in conversation
EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS*

Children show progress in **SPEAKING** when they:

1. Communicate needs, wants, or thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions, and/or words
2. Communicate information using home language and/or English
3. Speak clearly enough to be understood in home language and/or English
4. Use language for a variety of purposes
5. Use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary and language
6. Initiate, ask questions, and respond in conversation with others

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**Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children’s EMERGENT READING:**

- Read to children often for pleasure and information
- Point out the names of things, signs, labels, etc., in the neighborhood or store
- Make book-reading time special for your child
- Call attention to books, newspapers, and magazines in the home
- Visit a library often and check out books to read
- Ask children questions about the stories read together
- Encourage children to talk about and predict what will happen next in a story
- Repeat nursery rhymes and play word games

**Strategies TEACHERS and CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children’s EMERGENT READING:**

- Provide and share books with children, re-read favorite stories, and model reading behaviors
- Provide materials such as flannel board sets, puppets, and other props to act out and retell stories
- Provide many types of children’s books, references, pictures, and posters in the environment
- Talk about what words mean and write down dictation of children
- Help children learn about sequences in books such as beginning, middle, and end
- Provide opportunities for children to repeat familiar rhymes and experiment with beginning word sounds
EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS*

Children show progress in **EMERGENT READING** when they:

1. Initiate stories and respond to stories told or read aloud
2. Represent stories told or read aloud through various media or during play
3. Guess what will happen next in a story using pictures as a guide
4. Retell information from a story
5. Show beginning understanding of concepts about print
6. Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in own name
7. Begin to associate sounds with words or letters

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**Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children’s EMERGENT WRITING:**

- Provide writing materials in the home such as paper, pencils, crayons, and markers
- Support young children’s interest in scribbles and pretend writing
- Encourage children to participate in activities that involve reading and writing, such as making a grocery list
- Use writing to communicate with others with a card or letter
- Help children recognize own name and allow children to practice writing letters

**Strategies TEACHERS and CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children’s EMERGENT WRITING:**

- Provide many opportunities for children to draw and print using markers, crayons, and pencils
- Provide a literary-rich environment that includes writing materials in many areas of the classroom
- Promote literacy-related play activities and respect children’s attempts at writing
- Display models of adult and child writing in the classroom environment
- Encourage children’s interest and attempts to copy or write letters and their own name
EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS*

Children show progress in EMERGENT WRITING when they:

1. Understand that writing is a way of communicating
2. Use scribbles, shapes, pictures, or dictation to represent thoughts or ideas
3. Engage in writing using letter-like symbols to make letters or words
4. Begin to copy or write own name

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