



USING SONGS TO PROMOTE LANGUAGE

Songs are a great way to build language by teaching children how to make sounds, talk, move, listen and follow directions.

WHEN YOU SING:

- **Get the interaction going**– Be face to face and use an animated voice. Add sounds, gestures and actions to your song. Wait to see if your baby wants to hear the song again (e.g. with a giggle or wiggle) and repeat!
- **Build it up**– Start slowly to help your child learn the words and actions more easily. Once your child knows the song, speed it up and make it fun. Later, change the song to catch your child's interest (e.g. "Old Macdonald had a zoo...") and let your child add the words (e.g. "And at the zoo he had a...lion").
- **Repeat**– Repetition helps your child learn new words, understand new concepts and learn the full sentences of a song.
- **Take turns**– Get your child to join and take his turn by clapping his hands, banging on a kitchen pot or dancing while you sing. Once he knows the song well, stop and wait to see if your child can fill in parts of the song (e.g. "Row, row, row your ____").

SING SONGS...

- **About your child**– Make up a song about your child with a familiar tune. It can be about something she did, or an activity or toy. (e.g. use the tune of "Row, row" to sing "Wash, wash, wash the doll, make her nice and clean!").
- **During daily routines**– Singing songs during routines can help your child learn words. It may even help a difficult routine be more enjoyable (e.g. "This is the way we wash our hair, wash our hair, wash our hair").
- **With actions**– use hand over hand if needed to teach fun actions to go along with the song (e.g. "Wheels on the Bus", "Itsy Bitsy Spider").
- **To pave the way to early literacy**– Start with nursery rhymes with your baby and then move on to rhyming songs (e.g. "Down by the Bay") or songs with the letters of the alphabet (e.g. "ABC song").
- **That relate to your culture**– Singing traditional songs in your first language is a wonderful way to explain new words and talk about the story behind the song.

For more information visit www.onekidsplace.ca