



Letter Recognition and Sounds Suggested Activities

- **Emphasizing the importance of Text:** You can emphasize the importance of text with your child while you are reading together by dragging your finger along under the text while you read. This communicates to your child that you use the text to read the story, not the illustrations. The illustrations are there to emphasize the text and bring the story to life. By doing this you are also teaching your child that when someone reads, they read from left to right, top to bottom. You can also have a little fun, to help reinforce that books are to be used upright and read from front to back by holding the book upside down to see if your child notices or pretending to read back to front or starting in the middle of the book. The sillier the better! When your child notices, let them correct you and ask for assistance in how the book should be used. Your child will love the silly antics and the opportunity for their caregiver to learn something from them for a change.
- **Using a letter chart to sing The Alphabet Song:** You can use the alphabet song to introduce your child to the names of each of the letters. You can use a letter chart to sing the alphabet song by pointing to each letter as you sing it. You can move your finger along slower and sing slower or speed up and sing faster! Encourage your child to point to each letter as fast or slow as they would like to control how fast or slow you sing. Using play and silliness to teach will create a positive experience for your child and encourage their interest in literacy.
- **Use the letters of your child’s first name when beginning to introduce writing letters:** When introducing your child to writing letters, start with the letters in their name. This is also a perfect opportunity to introduce uppercase and lowercase letters. A person’s name starts with a capital letter and is followed by lowercase letters. You can use a letter chart to ask your child to help find each letter in their name. It could sound like this, “Ava begins with a capital ‘A’. Can you find

the big 'A'? Great! Let's write the capital letter 'A'. Here, I'll write it and then you can trace it or write underneath it. Okay I wrote 'A' now it's your turn. Wow, that's a great effort! Look at your capital 'A'. The next letter in your name is a lowercase 'v'. Can you find the small 'v'? You're close! This is 'v'. Can you point to the small 'v'? Perfect! Let me write a lowercase 'v' and then you can. Here's the pencil for you to start. Okay the last letter in your name is a lowercase 'a'. Can you find the small 'a'? Okay great, I'll write it then you can. Here's the pencil." It's also helpful if your child can see their name spelled somewhere. You could write your child's name on a sign and tape it on their door, just somewhere where it is visible.

- **Using sticky notes to make a game out of letter recognition:** Alphabet race is a letter recognition activity that you can easily adjust to meet your child at their level and burn off some energy! For this activity you will need a sharpie, sticky notes or small pieces of paper and tape, and an area where your child can run from one wall to another without obstacles. To begin, choose two letters from your child's name and write each letter four times so you end up with eight total. Put the sticky notes on one wall or tape them up. Instruct your child to play that they will stand at the opposite wall with their hand on it. You will let them know what letter to grab and say "Go!" and they can run to the letter wall, find the letter, and run to stick it on the empty wall. Repeat until all the letters are on the opposite wall. To make this more challenging you can add additional letters or capital and lowercase letters.
- **Use chalk to guide your child in tracing letters:** Chalk letter tracing. For this activity you will need chalk and a safe concrete or asphalt area. A back patio could be great! To begin write out the letters of the alphabet in a dashed or dotted style. You can then challenge your child to trace as many letters as they are able to. To turn chalk letter tracing into a game you can write out each letter onto a small square of paper and let your child draw a letter and then find that letter to trace.
- **Use the "Letter Sounds and Pictures Matching Activity" page to work on letter sounds:** Our last suggested activity focuses on letter sounds. You will need these two activity pages. One with the letters scrambled and this second page with pictures that correspond to each letter. You will also need scissors. Cut out the pictures and place them in a pile face down. Sit down with your child and choose one picture from the pile to turn over. For example, one of the pictures here is a watermelon. Watermelon begins with the "wah" sound which is the letter 'w's sound. So you would place the watermelon over the 'w'. You can glue down the pictures if you choose but we recommend repeating this activity with your child, especially if there are certain letters they are

less familiar with. If there are any letter sounds your child is unfamiliar with you can list other examples besides the picture to help them choose the letter. For example if your child was struggling with the 'w' sound "wah" you could list other things that start with 'w' like water, wagon, or worm.