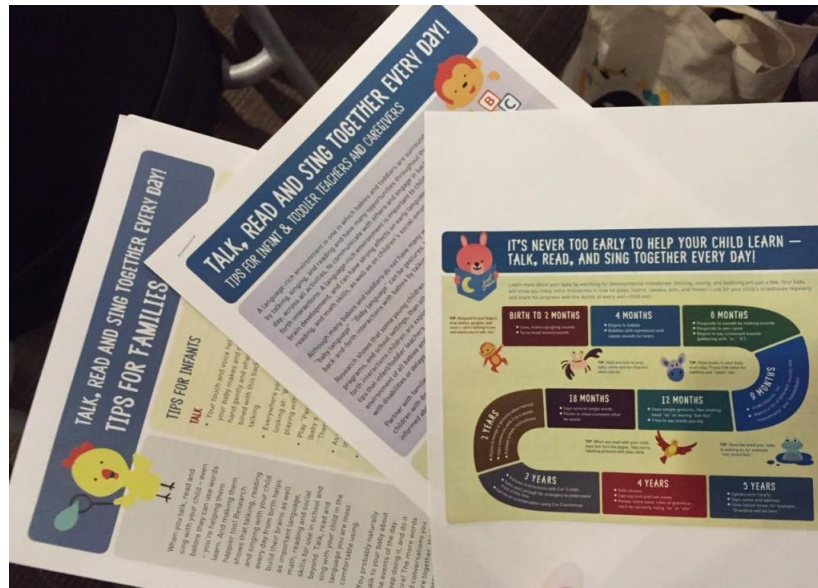


[Engaging Families and Communities to Bridge the Word Gap](#)

This post originally appeared on the [Too Small to Fail](#) blog.



Children begin learning from the moment they are born. By seeing, hearing, and exploring the world around them, particularly through close loving relationships with their families and caregivers, babies' brains rapidly develop. The more enriching experiences they have with those who love and care for them, the more they grow – especially when words are involved. Research has found that providing infants, toddlers, and young children with consistent, language-rich experiences – talking, reading, and singing – greatly benefits their brain development and school readiness.

However, many families lack access to the types of information and resources that can help them make everyday moments into learning opportunities that are rich in language. Researchers have found that some children are exposed to more language-rich environments than others during the early years, which can result in a gap in the quantity and quality of words that children hear and learn. The richness of children's language environment can impact school success and outcomes later in life. .

That's why, the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education, in partnership with *Too Small to Fail*, are providing these critical resources to families, caregivers, and early learning providers. Last week, we proudly released "Talk, Read, Sing Together Every Day", a free suite of resources that can help enrich children's early language experiences by providing tips for talking, reading, and singing with young children every day beginning from birth and extending into the early years.

This toolkit is a result of a commitment made at the [2014 White House convening](#) on "bridging the word gap." The resources include:

- Tip sheets for [families](#), [preschool teachers](#), [infant/toddler teachers](#), and other caregivers;
- [A developmental milestone chart](#) to track a child's development from birth through age 5; and
- A fact sheet that highlights the evidence behind the [benefits of being bilingual](#) and embracing a child's home language.

Talking matters, and, no matter what language you speak – the more words the better. To make these resources as accessible and inclusive as possible, all tip sheets are available in English and Spanish, and can be [downloaded for free](#).

Talking, reading, and singing are teaching. But more than that, talking, reading, and singing are simple gateways to opportunities for children and their families. They are brain building activities that set the foundation for school readiness and school success. These everyday activities are ones that all families and communities can engage in to ensure that their young children have the best start in life.

When families, caregivers and teachers partner to promote children’s early education, children win.

To read more about these resources, or to download them visit [the U.S. Department of Education](#) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services websites or [Too Small to Fail](#).

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<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2015/07/engaging-families-and-communities-to-bridge-the-word-gap/>

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