

## Babies Need Words Every Day: Talking Points

### Key Messages

- By the age of four, children in low-income homes will have heard 30 million fewer words than their more advantaged peers. This word gap has a profound influence on a child's ability to succeed in school and later in life.
- Small steps have a big impact. The Babies Need Words Every Day: Talk, Read, Sing, Play campaign uses low-cost, highly-visible posters to deliver key ideas and encouragement straight to those who have a greatest influence on a child's language development: her parents and caregivers.
- Ongoing research proves that one of the most high-impact and cost-effective ways to reduce crime, improve health and education outcomes, and build a thriving community is by investing in its youngest members.
- Historically, libraries have served an essential role in providing equal access to knowledge—a role that is even more essential as information technology and community demographics change rapidly. Through their diverse services, libraries are uniquely positioned to support family literacy and learning across backgrounds.



### Why is the Babies Need Words Every Day project so important?

- The frequency and quality of communication that a child experiences directly shape his or her brain development.
- Among children born in 2001, only 48 percent of poor children started school ready to learn, compared to 75 percent of children from middle-income families.\*
- **The Babies Need Words Every Day project** is a simple, powerful, affordable intervention that can help to bridge the achievement gap and improve a student's chances to thrive later in life.

## More about the Babies Need Words Every Day: Talk, Read, Sing, Play project

- Babies Need Words Every Day: Talk, Read, Sing, Play is a public-awareness campaign designed to help primary caregivers understand the importance of high-quality communication with their children.
- The campaign's core resources are beautifully designed posters that deliver simple, effective rhymes, games, and other suggestions for immediate, enriching ways to communicate with babies.
- These posters are available as a free, easily reproducible download from ALSC's website, along with suggestions for placing the posters above changing tables and other high-visibility locations.
- In addition to these public-awareness posters, ALSC has also created culturally diverse book lists to support young children's acquisition of language and basic concepts.
- The Babies Need Words Every Day: Talk, Read, Sing, Play campaign is part of a nationwide initiative.

## Additional Resources

The following organizations share the common goal of bridging the word gap:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
(<http://www.naeyc.org/tyc/article/the-word-gap>)
- The Thirty Million Words initiative  
(<http://thirtymillionwords.org/>)
- Too Small to Fail (<http://toosmall.org>)
- Zero to Three ([www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org))



\*Statistics from **Too Small to Fail**