5 Pre-Reading Skills Your Child Needs to Be A Successful Reader and How You Can Support Them:

Pre-Reading skills are a key part of reading. Without them, your child will struggle to read text and understand what they are reading.

1.  Motivation to Read:

In order to learn, children need to be ready and have the motivation to read.

What Can Children Do?

* Show an interest in books and reading
* Ask you to read aloud
* Pretend to read

What Can Parents Do?

* Let your child pick a book he or she wants to read
* Read to your child everyday or listen to audio books (free on YouTube)
* Read with enthusiasm and use different voices, change the volume and pitch of your voice.

2.  Language Skills:

Children use language skills as part of learning how to read, so they can describe things and share their knowledge and ideas.

What Can Children Do?

* Answer simple questions about a story
* Retell a story in their words
* Describe elements in a story such as the characters and setting

What Can Parents Do?

* Ask your child open-ended questions like “what do you think will happen next?”
* Have your child retell the story using puppets, pictures or drawings
* Encourage your child to make up his or her own story

3.  Concept of Print:

In order to learn how to read, children must understand how books are organised and the concept of print.

What Can Children Do?

* Hold a book correctly, turn pages in the right direction
* Read from left to right and top to bottom
* Understand words represent a spoken word and convey a message

What Can Parents Do?

* Use your finger to track the words
* Point to the parts of a book such as the front cover, title, and author
* Let your child hold the book, turn the pages, and point to the words as you read
* Point out logos and words in the world around you, e.g. McDonalds sign, their name.

4.  Letter Knowledge:

Letter knowledge is understanding that the letters of the alphabet have different names and sounds.

What Can Children Do?

* Name the letters of the alphabet
* Recognise lowercase and capital letters
* Name each letter’s sound

What Can Parents Do?

* Teach your child the letters in his or her name
* Read Alphabet books
* Ask your child to identify letters on things in the supermarket or on signs around town
* Watch Alphablocks on YouTube
* Listen to Jolly Phonics songs on YouTube.
* Teach your child the letter SOUNDS instead of the name. (Videos of the sounds are on YouTube. The Jolly phonics songs also model the sound.)
* Play I Spy with my little eye something that begins with…

5.  Phonemic Awareness:

Phonemic awareness is hearing and understanding that words are made up of smaller sounds.

What Can Children Do?

* Rhyme
* Count the syllables in a word
* Blend sounds together
* Segment or break words down into individual sounds
* Substitute one letter sound for another one to make a new word

What Can Parents Do?

* Sing songs and rhymes
* Play word games
* Reading rhyming books