



### Quotes from the field with tips for parents and families

“Work on art projects as a way to engage in discussion about the art piece and what my child ‘sees.’”

### Here's how . . .

Engage with your child. Collaborate with him in creating a joint painting, collage or other art project. Interact with your child as he explores a variety of art forms and the materials or media that prompt his creativity and self-expression. For example, you may provide a variety of writing and drawing materials including crayons, paints, markers, pencils and paper. As you use these materials to create, describe how you feel or what you think about the result. Ask for his ideas and opinions, too. What does he “see” in the art you are co-creating? Sharing in this kind of collaborative art experience provides a chance for a rich language exchange with your child.

You may want to read a story together, and take on different characters. Use props and act out the order of events; explore how your child feels when he’s acting like \_\_\_\_\_. Share your own thoughts and feelings about your character.

### Why is this important?

Your child’s language ability affects learning and development in all areas. Language strongly predicts later success in learning to read and write. Children who are skilled communicators are likely to demonstrate better social interactions and school readiness skills.



Parent-child interactions are important to the language development of very young children in three ways

- ✓ they allow for adults to model the functions and purposes of language;
- ✓ they allow adults to monitor the child’s progress when engaging children in extended conversations; and
- ✓ they afford children the opportunity to use their current language resources as well as augment their vocabulary with new words (Hart & Risley, 1999)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hart, B. and T. R. Risley (1999). *The social world of children learning to talk*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks.