

TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY HELPS YOU RAISE A LIFETIME LEARNER

BY JOHN FANCHER, TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY

For 2-year-old Gavin Bonner, visiting the Herman and Kate Kaiser Library on Hudson Ave. in Tulsa, is a new source of joy. "Gavin absolutely loves coming to library storytimes," said Wheatina Bonner, Gavin's mother. "He gets excited when we arrive. As we walk in, he starts reciting the nursery rhymes he learned during our last visit to the library."

They recently started attending the "My First Storytimes" at the library. Designed for newborns to 2-year-olds and their caregivers, these storytimes help acclimate future readers to a world of words. The interactive programs are approximately 20 minutes and feature songs, bright picture books and musical instruments.

As an additional avenue of learning interest to families, Tulsa City-County Library recently added "Family Place Libraries" to four locations – Martin Regional, Hardesty Regional, Owasso and Herman and Kate Kaiser libraries. Each location features a specially designed space for families with young children. The area is located within the children's area, and it contains educational toys, music and multimedia materials.

Because of its commitment to providing services such as this, TCCL was one of 11 national institutions, and the only Oklahoma recipient, of the 2012 Institute of Museum and Library Services award. The "Family Place Library" initiative focuses on parents and caregivers as first teachers, emphasizing libraries as key institutions for early childhood development, as well as partners in the



Two-year-old Gavin Bonner enjoys visiting the Herman and Kate Kaiser for storytimes, games and newfound friendships.

promotion of healthy child and family development.

TCCL also offers "First Reader" packets filled with literacy information to help raise a lifetime reader. Available at your local library, you will find easy tips to use every day with babies and children through age 5. Packets include: a growth chart; a "Finger, Hand & Action Rhymes" booklet; "Infant and Toddler Songs" booklet; and a free board book, *Everywhere Babies*, written by Susan Meyers and illustrated by Marla Frazee.

To see a current schedule of storytimes at any of TCCL's 25 locations, visit the library's website, www.tulsalibrary.org, or call the AskUs Hotline at 918.549.7323.

Here are helpful tips for guiding you through the first year of introducing your new baby to the enjoyment of lifelong learning.

continued

Birth to 4 Months

Types of Books:

- Stiff cardboard books
- Soft but firm vinyl books
- Simple large pictures set against a contrasting background

Suggestions:

- Open books flat and stand them at the side of the crib when the baby is resting on her back.
- Place open books at the head of the crib or on the floor when baby is on his stomach.
- Recite rhymes or sing songs; babies often settle down to the steady rhythm.
- Using books in these early months is one way to introduce language to your child.
- Read, talk and sing with expression.

4 to 6 Months

Types of Books:

- Cloth and soft vinyl books. These are lightweight and compress in babies' hands as they are grasped.
- These books are easier to pick up and can be washed.
- Simple, bright pictures against a contrasting background are still the most appealing illustrations.

Suggestions:

- Let your baby manipulate the books any way he wants.
- Sit baby in your lap to spend a few minutes looking at the pictures and listening to brief rhymes.
- Read and sing with expression. Your baby is learning that reading is fun!

7 to 9 Months

Types of Books:

- Chunky board, block or chubby books. These are small and constructed so that the next page springs up when the previous page is turned.

Suggestions:

- Let babies explore the hinged nature of their books.
- When holding the baby in your lap to read, name pictures and colors, count items and begin to read what are by now those familiar nursery rhymes.

9 to 13 Months

Types of Books:

- Standard cardboard books may be used.
- Pictures of familiar things and activities may be the books babies will like best.
- Novelty books with which children can interact become fun at this age.

Suggestions:

- Continue to label or name the pictures; babies may begin to attempt to repeat some words.
- Make a big game out of sounds; particularly animal sounds, but also trains, cars, etc. Babies love to hear and imitate these sounds.
- Books with thick paper pages may be introduced.

Safe Sleep Top 10

1. Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night. The back sleep position is the safest, and every sleep time counts.
2. Place your baby on a firm sleep surface, such as on a safety-approved crib mattress, covered by a fitted sheet. Never place your baby to sleep on pillows, quilts, sheepskins, and other soft surfaces.
3. Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area. Don't use pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins, and pillow-like crib bumpers in your baby's sleep area, and keep any other items away from your baby's face.
4. Do not allow smoking around your baby. Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby, and don't let others smoke around your baby.
5. Keep your baby's sleep area close to, but separate from, where you and others sleep. Your baby should not sleep in a bed or on a couch or armchair with adults or other children, but he or she can sleep in the same room as you. If you bring your baby in bed with you to breastfeed, put him or her back in a separate sleep area, such as a bassinet, crib, cradle, or a bedside cosleeper (infant bed that attaches to an adult bed) when finished.
6. Think about using a clean, dry pacifier when placing the infant down to sleep, but don't force the baby to take it. (If you are breastfeeding your baby, wait until your child is 1 month old or is used to breastfeeding before using a pacifier.)
7. Do not let your baby overheat during sleep. Dress your baby in light sleep clothing and keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult.
8. Avoid products that claim to reduce the risk of SIDS because most have not been tested for effectiveness or safety.
9. Do not use home monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS. If you have questions about using monitors for other conditions talk to your health care provider.
10. Reduce the chance that flat spots will develop on your baby's head: provide "Tummy Time" when your baby is awake and someone is watching; change the direction that your baby lies in the crib from one week to the next; and avoid too much time in car seats, carriers, and bouncers.

Source: www.nichd.nih.gov