

Words of Wisdom from Ruth Ann

As the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Grant called Early Steps to Literacy comes to a close in September 2004, all of the members of the Early Steps Team want to say thank you for your gift of time and commitment to learn about early literacy. I, along with our Team, have felt honored to provide the resources you needed to learn about early literacy.

Your commitment to learn new techniques in your teaching to provide literacy rich environments for your children was evident in your transformation of classrooms and becoming intentional in your teaching. You were willing to change the way you thought about teaching your children or supporting your staff.

- You talked more with children developing their vocabulary through oral language.
- You guided children to identify all the things in our environment that are part of learning about concepts of print, also the parts of books and how we read from left to right, top to bottom.
- You helped children learn the sounds of the letters which developed phonemic awareness.
- You helped them learn about letters through alphabetic knowledge.
- Most of all you learned how to observe children, so that you would know what books to read, how to prepare your lesson plans to meet the needs of the children.
- You integrated literacy within your children's play.
- You read a lot of books.
- You also allowed your mentor to coach you and give you new ideas.

Now the challenge is to "keep it up". Make everyday experiences authentic and real to your children. And have fun doing it. Children are like sponges and are so ready to read and learn. I see the love of learning in their eyes everyday when I am in the classroom with our youngest. What a gift you give to those whose lives you touch!

Remember to call us at the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development if you have any questions, need to learn more about early literacy or just need to talk and share. My number is 405-799-6383, ext. 248 or toll free -0 1-888-446-7608.

Happy Teaching, Ruth Ann Ball, Project Director
Early Steps to Literacy