

## Building Vocabulary

### Having a rich vocabulary will help your child:

- Communicate his ideas easily
- Ask for what he needs
- Develop strong reading skills

### Ideas to try with your child:

- Offer new words as you go about your day. Your child will quickly add them to the words he already knows. "I see you're wearing your blue shirt with your *green plaid* pants." "We're having chicken *casserole* and fresh *broccoli* with *ranch dressing* for dinner."
- Expand your child's language. When he says, "I want that" and points to his shoes, expand his language by saying, "Oh, you want your brown shoes with the white laces." This will help him connect words with real objects.
- Read to your child at least 20 minutes per day to introduce new vocabulary. Look for favorites like: Corduroy by Don Freeman, Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae, or Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus by Mo Willems.

### If your child is struggling:

- Use words that describe actions when talking to your child. "John, you are running very fast today."
- Extend your child's sentences. If he says "cup" say "Yes, you have a red cup."

### Going further:

- Is your child interested in big rigs? Airplanes? Rocks? Sea creatures? Find non-fiction books in the library to gain facts about the subject.
- Give your child new vocabulary to express his feelings. "You seem frustrated that your puzzle piece doesn't fit." "I can tell you are excited to see Grandma."



The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 3-4** that parents can help improve at home.

Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Use multiword sentences, phrases and gestures to communicate needs, ideas, actions, and feelings." Communication, Ages 3-4, pg. 62