Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) was created to support research on what it takes for children to become fluent readers. There are two main strategies that prepare children to become readers...

**Decoding - sounding out words**
Putting letters and sounds together to make words. This includes knowing letters and how they are the same or different; playing with sounds; and understanding how books work.

**ECRR SKILL #1**
**Play with sounds**
- The ability to hear and play with smaller sounds in words; rhyming.
- When you can reproduce and break up sounds in words it makes reading easier.

**ECRR SKILL #2**
**ABCs**
- Knowing that letters have different names and represent sounds.
- Kids need to know three things about letters: names of letters, shape of letters, and sounds of letters.
- Letters build words, words build sentences, and sentences build meaning.

**ECRR SKILL #3**
**Love of books**
- Understanding that the black squiggles on the page have meaning; the printed word represents the words we speak.
- The direction of text; how to handle a book; and a love of books.
- When reading is fun, kids are motivated to learn to read.

**ECRR SKILL #4**
**Tell stories**
- Speaking, listening and communicating skills; the ability to describe things and to tell stories.
- Understanding what they're reading is motivation to keep reading.
- Helps with sequencing and creating their own stories.

**ECRR SKILL #5**
**Talk about words**
- Knowing the meanings of words, objects, actions, concepts, feelings, ideas.
- It’s much easier to read a word when you already can speak and define a word.
- The larger the vocabulary the easier reading comes. Reading and talking helps build their word bank.

**ECRR SKILL #6**
**Think about what is read**
- Background knowledge – what a child knows about the world and how things work.
- Encourages children to use their imagination.
- Encourages children to problem solve.
- Helps develop abstract thinking.

*Every Child Ready to Read, Second Edition* is a parent education initiative created by the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC).
THE 5 PRACTICES OF ECRR

These 5 practices are not tied to any individual ECRR skill. One practice can be applied to a number of the ECRR skills. For example, the practice of singing can support playing with sounds because most songs are broken down to one beat per syllable, ABCs (the alphabet song!), telling stories (sing a sequence song like “This is the way we...”), talk about words (the word “whirling” in the Dance Like Snowflakes song) and think about what is read (talk about how things might feel or sound, for example in the Dance Like Snowflakes song you can ask what it would feel like to be a snowflake (cold, light, airy).)

Read. When kids connect reading with love and warmth, they become curious and want to learn to read. Reading=happiness!

- It’s more important how we read with kids than what we read to kids. Keep reading positive and stress-free.

Write. Writing is more than putting pencil to paper. It is anything that builds large and fine motor skills to get kids ready to write. How to do this in story time:

- Have children write their names on a whiteboard, chalkboard or roll of paper.
- Have several pieces of paper laid out on a table where the children can sign in for story time (scribbles from toddlers count as signing in!)
- Write a letter in the air
- In Baby Time, have parents trace the letter on baby’s tummy.
- Use finger plays, shakers and scarves as they promotes fine motor skills that help with writing skills later on.

Sing. Singing slows down language to help children hear the smaller sounds in words.

Talk. By talking and listening to kids, you are helping them build brain connections and learn new words.

- Our job is to guide what kids say back to the book or activity while still validating their sharing.
- Talk about the story time theme and how it relates to their lives. “Today we’re talking about Fall. What do you notice about the weather outside? Yes, it’s chilly. And windy and rainy. What about the leaves?...”
- In Baby Time, point to and name familiar objects in a book or in the room
- Use multiple words to explain ideas. “Another way to say ‘soft brown bear’ is ‘plush brown bear’ or ask “What is the difference between being hungry and being ravenous?”

Play. Pretending helps kids try new skills, use their imagination and learn to manage their emotions and work with others.