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| Your Voice Matters | Your baby knows your voice, even at birth.  Sing, talk, and read aloud as often as possible.  The more words your baby hears, the more your baby’s brain and language skills grow. |
| The Right Sounds | While the PICU can be noisy, in many ways it is too quiet.  Babies in the PICU hear many medical noises.  All babies benefit from hearing spoken language. |
| What your baby understands | Your baby won’t understand what you are saying, so you can read or talk about anything that interests you.  It is important for your baby to hear your primary language. This will help your baby become familiar with and start to learn your language. |
| How your baby responds | As you read or sing or talk to your baby, your baby may relax, or fall asleep, or make little noises while you talk.  Even if you don’t notice a change in your baby’s behavior, hearing your voice is still helpful to your baby. |
| Finding the right time | Read, sing or talk to your baby when your baby is awake and quiet.  You can read or talk to your baby while they sleep, too. |
| Finding the right place | Hold your baby while you read or sing or talk to them, if you can.  Read to your baby while they lie in a crib.  Read to your baby through the portholes of their incubator |
| Follow your baby’s cues | Your baby may not be ready to listen when you are ready to read.  If your baby won’t settle, or cries, or puts out his or her hands like saying, “stop,” it might not be a good time to read.  You can try again another time. |

Recommendations modified from Levesque (2018) Implementation of a pilot program of Reach Out and Read® in the neonatal intensive care unit: a quality improvement initiative. J Perinatology. 38:759-766

For more information and age specific tips for reading to your child, visit reachoutandread.org