

Education providers.
s of Me
Numbers
All Around

Enewsletter
August 2025

Let's Celebrate our cultures!
Let's Celebrate our cultures!
buena tante

Nebraska
Growing
Readers



Children's Education and Parent and Child Together Time (PACT Time)

This month we focus on two important aspects of the four-component family literacy model: Children's Education and Parent and Child Together Time.

Children's Education: Early childhood centers, schools, libraries, and community-based organizations already provide high-quality children's education enriched by literacy activities. We want to provide you with tools that continue to build on the fabulous work you are already doing.

In this issue and on the NGR website, you can find materials that will support your curriculum. Thank you for all you offer children in the rich learning environment you provide and for the literacy opportunities you offer for children to explore.

Children's Education Resources

Counting on Books

While all books are rich with learning opportunities, sometimes you're looking for a specific focus for an activity. Here is a book that focuses on math that you can combine with a lesson on parts of the body and what they do.



Connecting with Local Support

Nebraska offers a variety of professional development opportunities for you to enhance the quality of learning in your child care. Connect with your region's Early Learning Connection Coach to find out about opportunities near you.

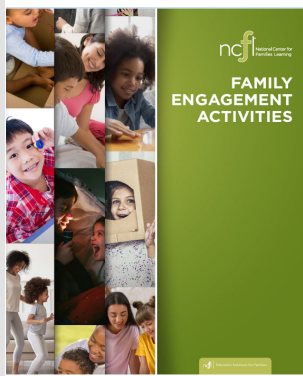
[Connect](#)

Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time®

PACT is part of our commitment to family engagement and is considered those moments where adults join with and support children in their educational process.

As an early childhood educator, you can offer opportunities for families to learn together within the the care setting and when they're at home. Family engagement events can be anything from family-inclusive back-to-school parties, shared resources with families, discussions about daily reading, (live or digital), or hosting a family event, such as decorating a book box, making a book mark, holding a book breakfast, or hosting a reading.

Here are two resources of PACT Time activities you can offer to families to enhance their learning together at home.



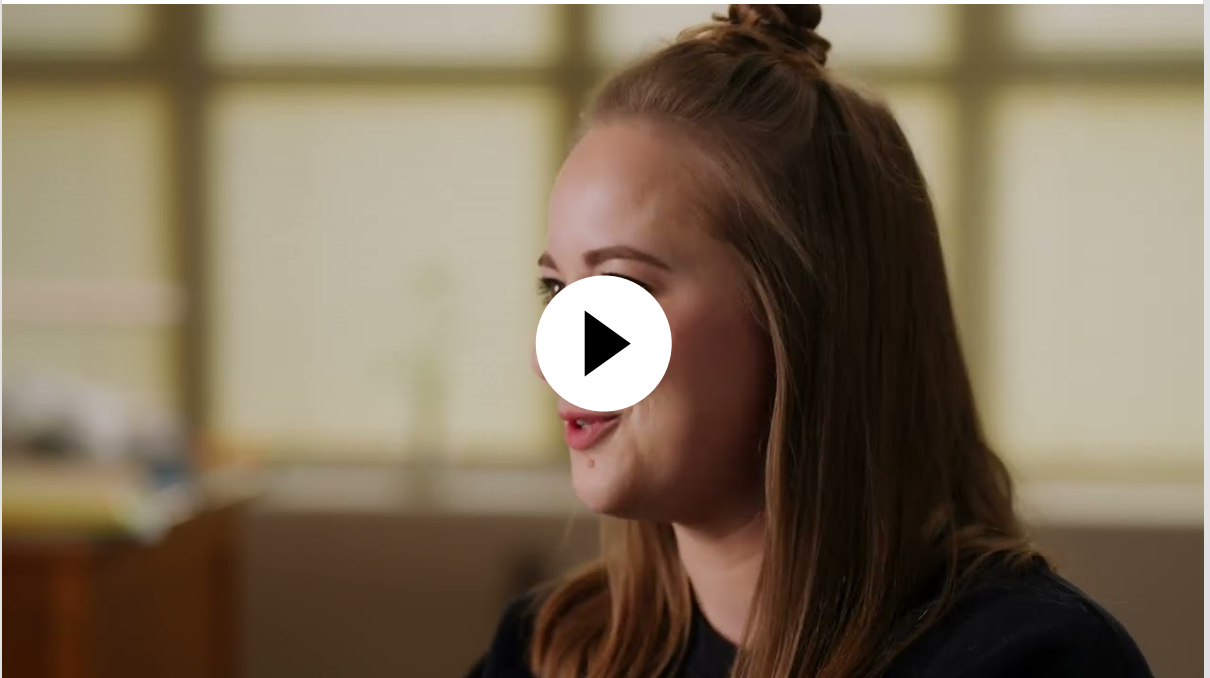
The National Center for Families Learning provides Family Engagement Activities to support PACT interactions. NCFL describes Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time® activities as "designed to be playful interactions between adults and children that also support the child's learning and development."

[View the Guide](#)

NCFL also offers the Play Toolkit, an online resource divided into six sections designed for families to support children's play as part of their daily routines. Sections include:

- Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time® at Home
- Visual Schedule
- The Play Cycle
- A Comfy Place to Read
- Art Together
- Open-Ended Materials

[View
the Tool Kit](#)



PACT Time

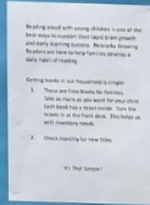
Learn more about the National Center for Families Learning's model of PACT time from this informative video provided by Nebraska Statewide Family Engagement Centers!

[Visit the National Center for Families Learning's Facebook page.](#)

[Visit](#)

Funding Update

NEBRASKA GROWING READERS



NGR is a recipient of the new Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant from the Nebraska Department of Education. This grant allows us to continue and deepen our work in Crete, Kearney, Schuyler, Scottsbluff, and Walthill.

The grant is a part of our ongoing effort to expand our literacy efforts across Nebraska with an aim toward potential future funding for other areas of the state.

NGR News

The Treasure of Literacy

We've been talking about the technical aspects of writing, the multiple drafts a story requires, the careful language choices you make, the editing and grammar checks, when Erika Fink does something that often happens in discussions of literacy. She tells a story.

Fink grew up in Singapore and emphasizes how important literacy is in a foreign country: reading road signs, understanding rules, deciphering language, and all those things that are important when you are navigating a different world. She begins, "I remember listening to my dad, and he'd read to us. You know, *Treasure Island*, some of those chapter books. And we were 7 kids, so at night he'd lie down on the bed, and we'd all sit around and he'd read those chapter books. I remember those connections related to literacy and

reading that were so important." The story segues into a discussion of her mother's command of Chinese, which leads to another story of a Chinese friend's family, who think that literacy is simply learning to read.

What Fink describes is part of the complexity of literacy generally and family literacy particularly. Her story is about so much more than reading: The children listen and thus develop that skill; They learn new words and information; They develop the skills of sitting quietly and being attentive; and They form lasting bonds with each other as siblings and with their father. Listen again to what she says, "I remember those connections related to literacy."



[Read the Full Article](#)

Nebraska Book Spotlight

Learning Together

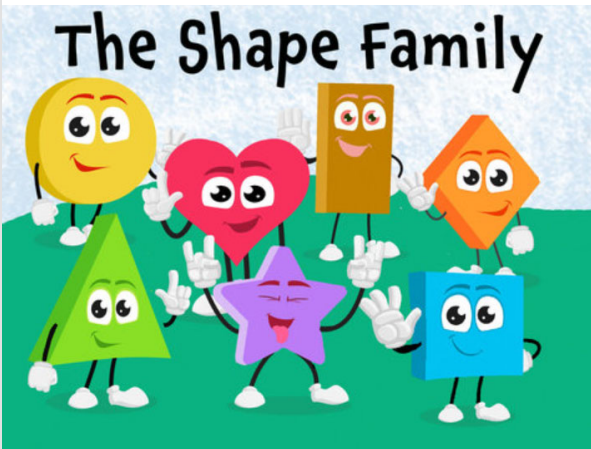
Use NGR books to share the activities you're using in your care setting. Families can then engage in shared reading as a way to learn together and to create meaningful bonds not only with their children, but also with caregivers.



Are you teaching sign language? Send a copy of *We Use Sign Language* home as a way for families to learn along with their children and to bond over a shared moment of literacy. You can even follow up with a family activity in your care setting.

-Ask your child's teacher if they use sign language in the classroom and practice at home.
-Look up a few signs on the internet and learn them with your child.

[Read the Book](#)



What's better than playing with blocks? Playing with blocks, talking shapes, and reading this fun book together. Plus you can share the book with families so they can reinforce shape play and learning at home.

-Name the shapes you see around your neighborhood.
-Draw shapes on paper for your child to color.

[Read the Book](#)

**Did you enjoy reading these books?
Want to read other books available
in the NGR library?**

[Visit the NGR Library](#)

Family Guides

The Nebraska Growing Readers website now offers a variety of family guides designed to inform and support families on topics such as health care, safety and prevention, wellness, language and literacy, development and parenting, relationships and behavior, and play as learning. The books are easy-to-read guides that can be used by providers and families.



Connecting with Your Toddler

It is crucial for families to create lasting bonds with their children. The National Institute of Health reports that the significant brain development that happens in the first two years of a child's life "depends on a loving bond or attachment relationship with a primary caregiver." *Connecting with Your Toddler* provides simple activities that help families create the lasting, loving bonds with their children that lead to healthy development and future success.

[Read the Guide](#)

View our full collection of Family Guides

[NGR Family Guide Library](#)

Want to connect to the NCFL Linked In page?

[Visit the NCFL Linked In Page](#)

What is the Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC)?

The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) leads the Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC) grant in Nebraska. In collaboration with local school districts, NCFL is implementing our two-generation, four-component model of family literacy programming under the "Family Learning Community" program name.

Current Communities are:

- Bellevue Public Schools
- Crete Public Schools
- Columbus Public Schools
- Millard Public Schools
- O'Neill Public Schools

- Learning Community Center of North Omaha

If you're in one of these communities and would like to get connected to the Family Learning Community, reach out to Hannah Van Horn at hvanhorn@familieslearning.org.

Join Our Facebook Group

Nebraska Growing Readers has a Facebook Group where you can get up-to-date information about the program; engage with this program and the other NGR provider sites; and share ideas, resources, and tips for getting kids excited about reading.

[Follow Us on Facebook](#)

This private group, will require you to answer a question to get in. There are no wrong answers. We just want to assure a safe space specifically for providers.

Learn More about Nebraska

[See Nebraska-Related Books](#)

Nebraska Growing Readers continues to build the library of content written by Nebraskans and about the various cultural experiences you can find in the state. Want to know more about Nebraska books? Visit our Spotlight on Books page to see what's happening in your state.

Nebraska Growing Readers is a collaboration between Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Statewide Family Engagement Center, and Unite for Literacy.

If you have questions of comments concerning the program, please contact [Greta Carlson](mailto:gcarlson@nebraskachildren.org) (gcarlson@nebraskachildren.org).



Our Contact Information

Nebraska Children & Families Foundation
215 Centennial Mall South
Suite 200
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-476-9401