

Helpful Hints for Working with Letters of the Alphabet

- ❖ **The Basics** – Have your child arrange the letters in alphabetical order. Sing the song pointing to each letter as you sing it.
- ❖ **What is Missing?** – Once the letters are in alphabetical order, have your child cover his/her eyes while removing 4 or 5 letters or turning them face down. Have him/her open his/her eyes and tell you what letters are missing and then put them where they belong.
- ❖ **Upper/Lower Matching** – Have your child match upper and lowercase letters on a table. Have him/her practice saying the letters.
- ❖ **Alphabet Swat** – Spread a few letters out on a table or floor. Have the parent name a letter and the child tries to whack the letter with a flyswatter.
- ❖ **Beat the Clock** – To practice fluency, the above activity could be done using a timer and seeing how many letters the child can 'swat' in 1 minute. He/she should then try again to see if he/she can beat his/her previous time.
- ❖ **My Pile, Your Pile** – The parent shows a letter and the child tries to name the letter (or its sound). If he/she gets it right, he/she gets to put it in his/her pile. If he/she gets it wrong, the parent gets to put it in his/her pile. The person with the most cards in his/her pile is the winner.
- ❖ **Fast Flash Cards** – Cards are placed facedown. The parent turns 1 card over at a time and the child tries to say a word that begins with the letter. To incorporate more movement, the child can find objects in the room that begin with the letter and then touch them.
- ❖ **I'm Thinking of a Letter** – Place 5 or 6 cards on a table and give clues about the letter that you are thinking about. (For example: cat begins with this letter, it comes after B or before E, it is the 3rd letter of the alphabet, it is made of only curved lines, it is shaped like a cookie with a bit taken out of it.) The child then tries to guess the letter.
- ❖ **Memory/Concentration** – Place 12 cards of matching upper and lowercase letters face down on a table. Take turns turning 2 cards over at a time. If the cards make an upper/lowercase match you keep the cards and get another turn. If the cards do not match they are turned back over and your turn is over. Continue until all letters have been matched. The person with the most matches is the winner.
- ❖ **Switcheroo** – Put the letters in random on a table. Take turns swapping the first letter for the letter A, the second letter for the letter B, etc. Continue playing until all the letters are put in alphabetical order.

- ❖ **Alphabet Go Fish** – Deal five cards to each player. Place the remaining cards in a stack face down in the middle of the table. Players check their hands for any pairs, and place them face up in front of them if they have any. Player 1 then asks a player of his/her choice whether he/she has a particular card (do you have a lowercase h?). If he/she does, it must be handed over, and the pair can be placed on the table. If he/she doesn't, the player says, "Go Fish" and the first player must take a card from the pile.
- ❖ **Alphabet War** – Deal the alphabet cards evenly between two players. Players turn over the first card on their pile simultaneously, and call out if their card is closer to the beginning (or end) of the alphabet. They take both cards. The winner has the most cards when the pack is complete.
- ❖ **Musical Letters** - To practice writing place chairs in a circle and place the letter and a different coloured marker on each chair. While the music plays, the child marches around the circle holding a clipboard with paper or a dry erase board. When the music stops, he/she must find the closest chair, take the letter and the marker, and write that letter on their paper or dry erase board.
- ❖ **In My Name/Not in My Name** – Place the letters around the room. Give the child a paper that is divided in the center with, "Letter in My Name" on one-half and "Letter Not in My Name" on the other half. The child then walks around the room with a clipboard and looks for the letters in the room. When a letter is found, he/she determines which side of the paper to write on.