

All About Me

Creating Books to Share Experiences

Making a book with your child can be a special and enjoyable experience for both of you. It can increase your child's self-esteem, while providing opportunities to develop his language and fine motor skills. When the book is finished, it will be a lasting memory for your child and family.

What is an "All About Me" Book?

An "All About Me" book can be created for your child. It is a special book that tells a child's life story. Photographs, or mementos, of special events and milestones can be added to the book at any time. Celebrating your child's accomplishments is important because it builds self-esteem and motivates him to continue learning. Finally, creating an "All About Me" book shows your child that he is loved, unique and special.

"All About Me" Book Contents

To get you started, we have created several sections that can be included in your child's "All About Me" book. The book is an on-going project that you and your child can complete over time. Depending on your child's interests and attention span, you may wish to include only a few sections. Here is a brief description of each section:

Hello!

This page should include a recent picture of your child.

My Birthday

If you have a copy of your child's birth announcement you can add it to this section. You may also want to add a picture of him on each birthday.

My Family

You may want to have a page for each family member that includes their name and a photograph. Close friends can also be included in this section.

My School

Once your child starts school, you may want to add class photos. You can also add programs from school events, such as concerts, in which he has participated.

My Favourites

This is a great place to add information on your child's hobbies and interests.

I Can!

A record of your child's accomplishments can be kept in this section. Each time he reaches a goal, such as taking his first steps, tying his shoelaces or achieving another goal that he's

been working on, a new page can be added.

How to Make the Book

You will need:

- a computer and printer
- a blank scrap book
- photographs or pictures from magazines
- crayons, markers and stickers
- glue

Steps:

1. Print the pages for the book found at the end of this document.
2. Glue the first page to the cover of the scrap book.
3. Complete each page by filling in the blanks and decorating the pages with crayons, markers and stickers. When there is space for a picture, either glue a photograph in the square, or have your child draw a picture.
4. Add each completed page to the scrap book.

Hints:

1. If you don't have a scrap book on hand, you can make your own. Use some construction paper to make a cover, punch holes on each page, and attach it all together by tying a piece of string through all of the holes.
2. Make sure to leave some blank pages in each section. This way you can add extra pictures later on.
3. Whenever you add new pictures to the book, write a short sentence about what is happening, or who is in the picture.
4. The use of photographs is suggested because it makes the book more personal. However, if you do not have many photographs, you and your child can draw pictures, or cut them out of magazines.

Your “All About Me” book is ready to share!

Using the “All About Me” Book to Build Communication Skills

Develop Your Child's Sense of Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is an important skill for any child to develop because it helps him understand that other people are different and separate from him. When a child has a sense of self-awareness, he will be able to communicate more successfully with other people. **Self-awareness involves:**

- Recognizing your face in the mirror or in a photograph.
- Responding to your name when someone calls you.
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Understanding that people need “personal space”.

- Recognizing your name in print.
- Understanding that everyone has different needs and feelings.

When creating the “All About Me” book with your child, encourage him to point to himself in photographs. Prompt him by asking, “Where are you?”, or “Where’s Jimmy?” If your child needs help, take his hand and point to his picture and say, “There you are!”, or “Look! It’s Jimmy!” Once your child is able to identify himself in photographs, he can practise finding and naming family members and friends.

Making Choices

Encourage your child to make choices by looking at, pointing to, or telling you which item he wants to include in the book. This will provide him with opportunities to practise making eye contact with you and to learn ways in which questions can be asked and answered. To begin, it is best to present your child with two choices. **Here are some choices your child can make:**

- Which pictures or photographs to use.
- Where to glue a picture.
- What colour crayon to use.
- Which stickers to use.

When he reaches school or goes to child care, your child may be better able to make choices and to share during play and other activities with his friends.

Increase Vocabulary

As you complete the book together, emphasize words with which your child is unfamiliar, to help him understand what they mean and to learn how to say or sign them. Talk about what is happening in each of the photographs that you are adding to the book. As you describe each photograph, emphasize the important words and point to them. For example, “*Grandma is sitting under a tree.*” **Here are some word categories:**

- Actions: in, out, on, under, sit, stand, walk, run, eat, drink
- Activities: draw, paint, game, swim, cook, music, play
- People: mom, dad, teacher, friend, brother, sister
- Objects: book, bike, t.v., radio, doll
- Places: home, school, park, library

For familiar words for your child, you can point to a person, object, or place and ask him to name it. “Jimmy! Who’s under the tree?” Another option is to say a word and ask him to point to it in the picture. “Jimmy, can you show me the tree?”

Conversation Aid

If the whole family is involved in creating “All About Me” books, your child will have many

opportunities to participate in conversations by sharing materials and experiences with his brothers and sisters. While gathering information to include in each section, you can try asking your child some questions. Here are some common social questions other children or adults might ask your child. For example:

- How old are you?
- What's your name?
- What games do you like to play?

Your child may not be able to answer these questions on his own, or right away. You may want to coach him in answering a few basic ones. If your child communicates verbally, ask the question, then provide the answer yourself. Keep answers as short as possible. For example, "Jimmy, how old are you?" Wait at least 5 seconds for your child to respond. If he doesn't, you can say his age, "Four". If your child communicates nonverbally, you can show him how to answer with a simple gesture. For example, holding up fingers to show how old he is.

Using the "All About Me" Book to Build Fine Motor Skills

By encouraging your child to help you put together his "All About Me" book you can also work on fine motor skills, such as gluing and pasting pictures, writing his name or cutting out pictures and shapes.

Gluing or Pasting

Pour some glue into a small container and encourage your child to apply it using a popsicle stick. Show him how to dip the popsicle stick into the glue and spread it on the paper. Point out how glue goes on the back of the picture. If a popsicle stick is too narrow for your child to grasp, try using a paintbrush with a wide handle. Some children do not like the stickiness of glue, or getting their hands messy. If this is the case, try using a glue stick.

Drawing and Writing

If your child has difficulty grasping narrow pencils or crayons, they can be enlarged with hair curlers or clay. You can also purchase some thicker or "chubby" crayons for your child. Depending on your child's skill level, you can guide him to:

- Hold a crayon or pencil and make marks on the paper.
- Colour inside lines.
- Make lines or circles.
- Trace or practise printing letters.

If your child is interested in printing and writing, you can show him how to print his name. Start by printing his name and having him trace the letters, on his own, or with some help.

Cutting

Make sure you have a pair of plastic, child-safe scissors. Show your child how to hold a pair of scissors and make cutting motions before giving him some paper to cut. Once he is able to do this, sit beside him and hold out a thin piece of paper for

him to cut. When he is able to cut on his own, have him cut out the larger shapes.
You can help to cut out the smaller shapes, or finer details. [Download the All About Me
template](#)