

Talk, Read, and Sing To Your Kids Every Day: A Parent's Mantra

Kidz Central
Station

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By Renee Bock, Explore+Discover

I've been raising and working with children for almost twenty years and I woke up this morning to find one of the most compelling literacy campaigns I've ever seen. If you have children you will find it fascinating too. [Too Small To Fail](#) is an organization with a mission to raise awareness around what's called the "million word gap"—the disparity in vocabulary between rich and poor children in the United States and its impact throughout a child's education. Their recent public awareness venture is called "Talk, Read and Sing Together Every Day." They are definitely speaking my language. Their message is straightforward and important: You, the parent, are your baby's first teacher. All of your interactions with your child matter. If you want a child with lots of words who can think and read and take pleasure from these two things, you need to engage them with language of all kinds—especially around topics that interest them.

The importance of the campaign goes beyond focusing on parent interaction around one linguistic approach. It's the triumvirate that has the greatest impact. The fact that talking, singing, and reading all build baby's linguistic brain and add to later academic success (aside from overall productivity and happiness). That what the real news is here. We'd be wise to shift our teaching and nurturing of young children in response.

I'll admit that I'm the perfect audience for this campaign. I've devoted my life to these three things, but mostly singing with kids. I became a teacher because I believed that by singing and playing guitar with children every day I would make an impact on their language, their ability to tap into emotions, to feel part of a community, and basically to be all around happy and high functioning children. I love to listen to children talk, as they always outshine adults by far. The wisdom and humor of children's books has shaped my interactions with children. I can't imagine running a classroom without these rich language exchanges. For the past ten years I've hired teachers and directors who feel the same way. I've even paid for them to learn to play guitar.



All of this being said, the validation of the Too Small To Fail campaign bringing my three childhood favorites together—talking, reading, and singing—is immensely powerful. It ultimately felt like a mantra for all parents. Too Small to Fail is a largely influential organization. Backed by the Clinton Foundation and [New Generations](#), and led by Kara Dukakis (Michael Dukakis' daughter), they seem uniquely positioned to market big ideas that benefit all children. And I'm grateful. Isn't it uplifting, during a campaign year, to find political money being used for the greater good in a way that is quietly inspiring and informative?

You can check out the Sing, Talk and Read To Your Child campaign [here](#).

Renee Bock is a dedicated early childhood educator, who is currently the Chief Academic Officer at Explore+Discover, a social learning center in Manhattan that is committed to setting the standard for infant and toddler care and education. Renee has more than a decade of experience in the field and holds a Master's in Early Childhood Education from Bank Street College in New York. She has three sons, Ariel (16), Raffi (14), and Shaya (13).



Author: [Kidz Central Station](#)

Founded by a NYC mom of two young children, Kidz Central Station uses technology to solve the problem so many busy parents face—how to find, book, and manage their children's classes, camps, local family events, and birthday parties. Kidz Central Station offers more than 3,000 classes, camps, and birthday party options representing hundreds of NYC's top activity providers. With a sophisticated search engine and class reviews, it is easy for parents to find the best classes for their children, sign up for a trial class, and directly enroll.

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