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### **Developing literacy skills and habits in early years**

I have been an early years teacher for 26 years. For the past two years, I have been a director of a kindergarten. Nowadays, many children among the younger generation have not established reading habits and they may have reading difficulties. Reading habits are developed in childhood and most reading difficulties also begin in childhood. If a child does not have a role model at home, the kindergarten or the elementary school will be the place where the child gets the first experience with reading and books. It can be a good or a bad one, depending on how books and reading are presented to the child. In addition to beautiful, interesting and fascinating books, all classrooms should have a special place where children could explore those books – a 'Reading Nest'. I was the project manager of the *Reading Nest Project* in Estonia until it ended in 2012. The aim of the presentation is to provide participants with various methods that help to create a literacy-rich learning environment, and to develop literacy skills and habits in early years.