



# Lesestart 1-2-3

A nationwide program for early speech and reading development, sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, implemented by Stiftung Lesen (German Reading Foundation)



## The “Lesestart 1-2-3” Program (2019 - 2026)

**Target group:** Families with children from the age of one to three, in particular when the subject of reading and storytelling has not yet been anchored in their everyday family life.

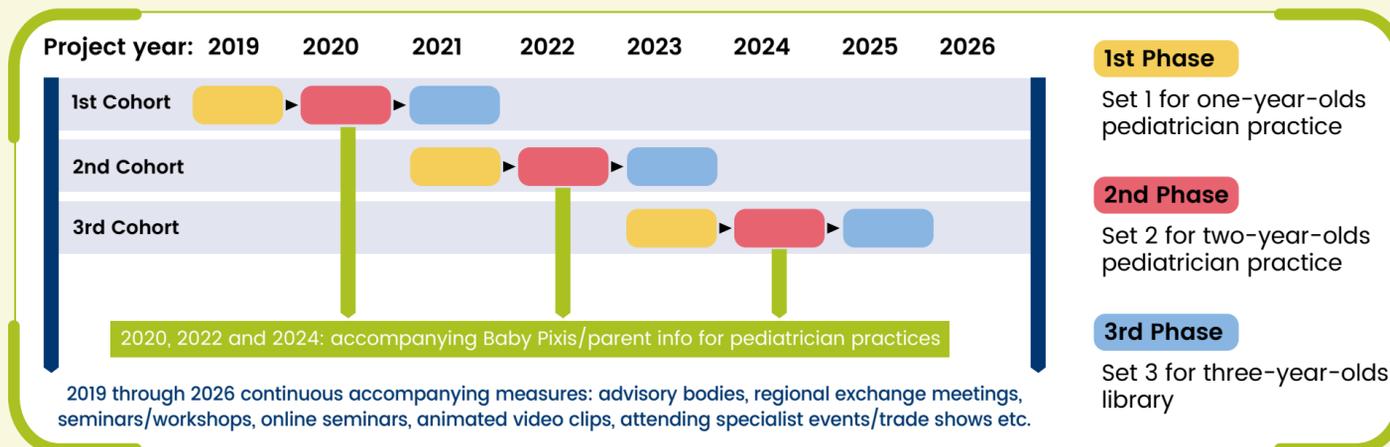
**Scope:** For the entire term, **4.5 mn. Lesestart Sets** are available.

**Objective:** Sensitization of families for the relevance of the subject, motivation for reading and storytelling in everyday family life, more equal opportunities for children in families with a lower education level background.

**Sponsoring:** Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF)

**Scientific accompanying research on behalf of BMBWF:** INTERVAL GmbH, Berlin (2019 - 2022)

**Design and procedure:**



**Program partners:** Berufsverband der Kinder- und Jugendärzte e. V. (professional association of pediatricians) and Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e. V. (German Library Association e.V.) as well as other library associations

- **More than 6,000 pediatricians** nationwide participate in the Lesestart program. About 99.3% of the children are presented for the U6 screening, 99% for the U7 screening (Schmidtke et al., 2018).
- Nationwide, **more than 5,000 libraries** participate in the Lesestart program. 62% of the adults using public libraries visited a library as children together with their parents (Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e. V., Stiftung Lesen 2012).

**Networking:** In five model regions, the cooperation with professionals who are active in accompanying and supporting families, is tested: For this purpose, accompanying measures are designed and implemented in the first three program years.

**Materials:** The book titles and accompanying materials are developed specifically for the program and the target group by Stiftung Lesen. In the process, it is supported by an independent material development commission. Additionally, the development is accompanied by pretests.

The Lesestart Sets include an **age-appropriate picture book** as well as **multilingual accompanying materials**. The content of the materials has been especially phrased for the target group, providing easier access to the subject of reading and storytelling with children at the age of one to three. In addition to the named materials, there are digital offers at [www.lesestart.de](http://www.lesestart.de).

## Scientific Background

### The effectiveness of early speech and reading development

The key factor in early speech and reading development is time:

**32%**

of parents with 2- to 8-year-old children stated in the Reading Study of 2019 that they rarely or never read to their children – among them predominantly parents with low formal education levels.

At the same time, reading constitutes an unassailable seed capital for learning how to read (Vorlesestudie 2018).

Book presents increase the chances that parents who rarely or never read to their children will read at least once a week to their children:

**55%**

of those who have received a book present before will read to their children once a week – compared to 30% of those who have not received a book present (Vorlesestudie 2020).

- The earlier parents begin, the more likely it is that they will read to their children continuously and frequently in the course of the early years, and the more likely it is that the children will already have gained good language skills by preschool age (Niklas et al., 2016; Dunst et al., 2012).
- A study on the American Early Head Start, an early childhood education program for children from underprivileged families, also already accounts for above average cognitive development in addition to better language skills in three-year-old children already (Love et al., 2005).
- Early speech and reading development lay a good foundation even long-term: Reading promotes speech development overall (Niklas et al., 2016; Reading Study 2018), reading motivation and reading behavior (Vorlesestudie 2011; Vorlesestudie 2018), cognitive abilities and educational outcomes (Kalb and van Ours, 2014), personal development (Anand and Roope, 2016) and social skills (Duursma et al., 2008).

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