



Help Your Child Learn To Read!

Your child was born to read! By helping your child build reading skills, your child will be more likely to do well in school. Children learn about reading by being in a family that reads. The more you include words and reading in your child's daily life, the better a reader he or she will grow up to be. What your infant, toddler or preschooler does at home will make a big difference when your child starts school. Try these suggestions:

YOUR INFANT:

- Start reading to your baby as soon as he or she can sit in your lap. Choose simple board books with colorful pictures. When reading, turn the pages slowly, or let your infant turn them. Children love "touch and feel" book. Or, look for books about babies, animals, toys, and other things your child sees every day.
- Look at the cover together so your child will recognize books by their covers. Read the same books over and over. Your child loves it!
- Talk and sing to your baby in the bath or while feeding or dressing.

YOUR TODDLER:

- Share books every day with your toddler. Make up voices and act out parts of the story together. Ask your child questions about the story, and answer his or her questions. For books that you and your toddler have read together in the past, leave out key words. Let your toddler fill in the blanks. At first, you may need to help your toddler, but soon your child will know the book by heart.
- Give your toddler non-toxic crayons and big pieces of paper to write and draw on. Ask your child to explain what the scribbles and pictures mean to him or her, and nod your head as you listen. Write your child's name on the drawing, put it up on the wall and tell everyone, "This is (child's name)'s drawing."
- Point out printed words in your child's everyday life. For example, at breakfast, point to the name on the cereal box and say, "Look! Cheerios! Your favorite!" Or outside, point to a stop sign or a street sign and talk about it.

YOUR PRESCHOOLER:

- Visit the library and let your child choose books that he or she likes. Be sure to read them to your preschooler every day.
- Ask your child to "read" you the story. Help your child tell the story based on the pictures in the book. When you read together, connect the story to your child's life. For example, "That book was about riding a school bus. I remember when we rode a bus. Do you? Where did we go?"
- Help your child learn the letters of the alphabet. Sing the alphabet song when your child washes his hands. Point out letters that are important to your child. For example, show your child the first letter of her name. If your child shows interest, help him learn all the letters of her name.
- Limit your child's TV watching. Choose which shows your preschooler is allowed to watch, and for how long. Be sure to not use TV as a babysitter.

ParentTips is a monthly resource for parents with young children.
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