

## Helping your Child to Read

### Excerpt from Chapter 2 From Baby to Starting School.

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- 7 Read to your child regularly from the very beginning when they are babies, even before they can understand what you are saying. Babies love to listen to voices and over time, babies will associate pleasant feelings with books and reading. "Parents who introduce their babies to books give them a head start in school and an advantage over their peers throughout primary school." (Wade & Moore, 2000). Children who are familiar with books and stories before they start school are better prepared to cope with formal literacy teaching.
8. Look at picture books together and read the same books to them over and over (I have provided a list of suggested books at the back of this booklet). Start to point to familiar objects and name them both in books and around the house. When a child hears the name of something over and over again they begin to connect the sound with what it means.
9. Play simple talking and touching games with your baby. Ask, "Where's your toes?" Then touch her toes and say, "There's your toes!" Do this several times, then switch to a nose or tummy. Stop when they (or you) grow tired of the game.
10. Say your child's name to them to catch their attention or to begin talking to them. When you are out continue to point out objects and tell your child the name. E.g. bird, dog, tree etc
11. Join a library. It is free and you can offer such a variety of language and literature to your child from books to music CDs, CDs to accompany books, DVDs, comics, IT

etc. Librarians can help you to select the best books that are suitable for your child's age level. They can also tell you about the other services the library has to offer.

12. Many libraries have story times that are geared to the attention spans of children according to their age. In addition to reading or telling a story the storyteller also may show you fingerplays and rhythm activities. The storyteller also may give you tips and handouts that you can use for your own story times at home. When your child is older they can attend special days at the library where adults read or tell them stories. Or later on they may want to attend the many "Activity" sessions held there during the school holidays. Find out about your library's services for young children.

13. Provide your child with books of their own to look at whenever they wish. There are now a number of robust and/or washable books that very young children can play with alone.



As children get older provide them with and read to them "Predictable books." These are normally books that use the same sentences over and over again. Examples of these would include "The Three Little Pigs" or "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." Your child will enjoy learning these words or phrases and will soon start to say them without you prompting them. By learning the phrases and repeating them your child is pretending to read which will give them confidence and motivation.

14. Let your child see you read. Children love to imitate their parents and it will also show them that you look on it as an important and pleasurable pastime.

15. Picture books with no words are good to use with older pre-school children (and for children at school). Look through the book together and discuss the pictures, what does your child think is happening, what do they think will happen next? Then ask them to use the book to tell or read you the story. Alternatively you could make up a story. By using picture books in this way you are improving your child's range of vocabulary and encouraging them to use and develop their imagination.....

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