

How Can I help my children with reading?

- ✓ Read **to** them for a short while every day.
- ✓ Don't forget the traditional nursery rhymes. Children will quickly learn them by heart and love to 'pretend' to read them in a book. Point to the words as you read them together.
- ✓ Point out signs in the environment. Children soon learn to read street signs, shop names and food signs e.g. ice cream.
- ✓ Make use of your local library – it's free to join!
- ✓ Do make an effort to hear your children read a little each day. It is better to hear your children read for five or ten minutes daily at a regular time than half an hour once a week. Do stop when the child loses interest.
- ✓ Try not to compare their progress with other children and always provide plenty of praise and encouragement.
- ✓ Remember that reading is for enjoyment. Building confidence is essential. Do not worry about your children moving onto more difficult books. It is much better for children to become confident at a particular level before taking the next step forward.
- ✓ Reading should be a choice, not a chore. Make sure there are a variety of books, magazines, and other materials available for your child to choose from. It is OK to let your child's interests guide their reading choices.
- ✓ Let your children see you reading books.
- ✓ Reading material comes in many different shapes and sizes! Magazines and comic books all provide opportunities for reading practice. Other suggestions for sneaking reading into your child's day include playing board games that involve written instructions or turning on subtitles on your television.
- ✓ To illustrate the practical side of reading, have your child help you with the shopping list, or leave reminder notes for your child to discover throughout the day.
- ✓ Another successful approach to motivating your child to read is to use a visible record of achievement. A chart or graph that marks the number of books a child has read gives him or her a sense of accomplishment. Choose a theme that goes along with your child's interests.

- ✓ Create a Bingo card or Passport where each space can be filled in by reading a different type of text – a mystery book, a piece of non-fiction, a book with an animal in it, etc

Hearing your child read

What do I do when my child makes a mistake?

- ✓ Listen carefully, if your child reads "Jim climbed on his pony" instead of "Jim climbed on his horse" do not interrupt because they understand the context. Reading every word correctly is not essential. Always let the child carry on when it still makes sense.
- ✓ If the mistake does not make sense, stop and ask them to think about what he is reading. If they read "the fireman pointed the house at the fire" ask them if it makes sense, always encourage them to correct mistakes themselves.

What do I do when my child does not know a word?

- ✓ If your child does not know a word at all, first of all, suggest reading to the end of a sentence and then returning to the unknown word. It is sometimes possible to guess correctly what fits in.
- ✓ If this fails, tell them the beginning sounds. If this fails, tell your child the word and re-read the whole sentence.

What else should I do when hearing my child read?

- ✓ Encourage your child to look at and discuss the pictures in the book. This will help them understand the story.
- ✓ Sometimes stop reading before you get to the end of the book and ask your child to tell you what they think is going to happen.
- ✓ Encourage your child to retell the story, starting at the beginning and putting the main events in the correct order.
- ✓ Talk to your child about the characters in the story. Who are they? What are they called? Do you like the characters? Why / why not?
- ✓ Encourage your child to read with expression, read out loud together. This is a great confidence builder and enables children to establish a rhythm in reading.

- ✓ Be relaxed. Remember it is important that children enjoy reading.

What if my child has difficulty learning new words?

- ✓ Write the words on some card or a piece of paper and play games with the words. Remember to write the words in lower-case letters e.g. house, not HOUSE. Always include some words your child is able to read as well as one or two new words. Make the games fun.

Games

I Spy – Play the game using the initial sound of words e.g. I spy something beginning with sh, ch, tr, bu etc. Play the game using rhyming words e.g. something that rhymes with peg etc.

Matching Pairs – write the words on cards. To make the game easier at first, keep one card turned over so that the word is showing.

Stepping Stones – write words e.g. house, dog, etc on large pieces of card. Ask your child to jump on 'house' etc.

Pointing Game – put words on the refrigerator e.g. red, window etc. Ask your child to hop to the refrigerator and point to 'red' etc.

Board games – play games like snakes and ladders. If your child lands on a snake they will not move down the snake if they read a word correctly.

Hunt the word – hide words around the room for your child to find. Give them clues e.g. 'you are very hot', 'very cold' etc. Let your child hide the words they can read for you to find.

Making Words – put magnetic letters on the refrigerator, encourage your child to make words with the letters.



Encouraging Children to read

