

## How Can I Help My Child Become a Reader? Parent Guide #17

**Learning to read and write is important to a child's success in school and life. Often the subject of reading gets all the attention. It's important to know that reading involves more than just sitting down with a good book.**

*To help a child become a good reader, he/she must be exposed to all the areas of literacy. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing are all key parts to helping children master and love reading.*

- Speak to your child every day. Use many words to share your thoughts and ideas. The number of words children know makes a difference in learning to read.
- Listen to what your child has to say. If you listen well, your child will talk more. Sometimes it takes a long time to put words together to tell a story, so be patient.
- Write down a story your child tells you and read it out loud together. Ask your child to draw pictures that go with the words.
- Introduce your children to their written names. Help them learn to write their names with upper and lowercase letters.
- Let your child see you enjoy reading. Often children love when we read to them. Read the newspaper, magazines, advertisements, and mail aloud.
- Sing with your child. Words are repeated in songs so singing is a wonderful way to learn words and hear rhymes.
- Make up stories about your child's daily activities. Use your

child as a character in the story. Children love to hear about themselves and their own adventures. They can be real or make believe. Have your child add details to the story.

- Have paper and writing tools available. Be an example by modeling writing throughout the day (letters, shopping lists, to-do lists, etc.). Know that your child's first scribbles and pictures are writing experiences. Have your child read his/her writing to you.

***Read to your child every day! Research shows that reading 30 minutes each day with your child will help her/him become a better reader.***

- Encourage your child to read to you. All children can share what they know about reading by telling a story and reading pictures.
- Help your child understand important book concepts. Point out the title, front of the book, author, illustrator, back of the book, pictures, words on a page and punctuation.
- When you read, explain that the words on a page are read from left to right. You may want to move your finger over the words as you read them.
- Before you turn to the next page, ask your child to predict what might happen. Give plenty of time to think about the possibilities before you give adult answers.

### ***Reading to your child – continued***

- Ask your child to help you read the words that repeat on his/her favorite pages. Read with different voices for the characters. Encourage your child to do the same.
- Notice your child's skills at reading signs in his/her surroundings. Labels, milk cartons, pictures on cereal boxes, stop signs, and store signs are a great place to start.
- Reading the same story over is good for your child. Children love to hear their old favorites over and over again.
- Children will watch your face for excitement or surprise about the story. Your voice will show that you love reading with your child.
- You have always been your child's first teacher. Keep up the good work.