



Welcome Baby



April 2010 A Newsletter for “*Welcome Baby*” and “*Parents as Teachers*” Families



Even when you're trying to get things done, you can encourage reading. If your child complains of boredom when you're cleaning, for instance, ask him or her to read aloud from a favorite book to you while you work. Younger kids can tell you about the pictures in their favorite books.

And make sure kids get some time to spend quietly with books, even if it means bypassing or cutting back on other activities, like time in front of the TV or playing video games.

Most important, be a reader yourself. Kids who see their parents reading are likely to join them and become readers, too!

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Everyday Reading Opportunities

Whether your child is a baby, a preschooler, or old enough to read independently, finding time to read is important to developing literacy skills. And there are many easy and convenient ways to make reading a part of every day — even when it's tough to find time to sit down with a book.

Finding the Reading Moments

Car trips, errands, and waits in checkout lines and the doctor's office are all opportunities for reading. Keep books or magazines in your car, diaper bag, or backpack to pull out whenever you're going to be in one place for a while. Even if you can't finish a book, read a few pages or discuss some of the pictures. Encourage older kids to bring favorite books and magazines along wherever you go.

Other reading moments to take advantage of throughout the day:

- in the morning, before breakfast or getting dressed
- after dinner, when kids are relaxed
- bath time (with plastic, waterproof books)
- bedtime

Reading opportunities are everywhere you go. Read signs aloud to your baby while you're driving. Ask your preschooler to "read" pictures on boxes at the store and tell you about them. And have older kids tell you what's on the shopping list.

Even routine tasks around the house, like cooking, can provide reading moments. With younger kids, read recipes aloud; ask older kids to help by telling you how much flour to measure. Give your child a catalog to read while you look at the mail. Ask relatives to send your child letters or e-mail and read them together.

Storytelling

It may already have happened: When books, toys, songs, snacks, video games, and DVDs have lost their charm, your child pipes up with "I'm bored! Tell me a story, please." Your mind blanks and your child looks at you with anticipation. What should you do?

You may not realize it, but you have a wealth of stories to share. You don't have to invent them on the spot. Personal stories, particularly from your childhood or from books you've read, are good starters.

Preschoolers and toddlers enjoy stories about characters from their favorite books. Whether you take Little Chick on a walk through the barnyard or Firefighter Bob on an exciting drive through the city, don't worry too much about plot. Young kids enjoy the chance to share the chick's peeping or the siren's squeal.

Older kids can appreciate a funny twist, so take a favorite story and turn it upside down by changing the setting, characters, or plot. Make that zany cat with the big striped hat fly to the moon on a spaceship or come to your neighborhood and cause all kinds of problems. Make your child the main character in a wacky adventure that fits his or her interests (for example, traveling back to see dinosaurs or working as a train conductor).



Young kids enjoy hearing stories about you and your family. When did you lose your first tooth? Who was a favorite teacher? Thinking about Mommy or Daddy as a little kid may spark the imagination. Maybe you want to share the story, passed down to you, about the ghost that lived in your great-grandmother's attic. And there's nothing more delightful than a story about the time a parent did something mischievous and the consequences. Kids delight in these glimpses of a past that is connected to them.

When you tell stories, you show how to put words together to make meaning. You share something new about yourself that your kids may find interesting or exciting and that might be a springboard for questions and discussions. Most important, you nurture a love of language and stories that kids will have for life.

So take a deep breath and begin: "Once upon a time"



Taken in part from:

Diederich, Gail. Aug 2007. *Storytelling*.

Retrieved on January 28, 2010 from http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/all_reading/storytelling.html

Helping Reluctant Readers

For many kids, reading just doesn't come easily. Some kids have difficulty connecting letters and their corresponding sounds. Others have yet to discover that special enchanting story that grabs the imagination and shows just how fun reading can be. For all kids, though, being at ease with letters, their sounds, and words is an important foundation for learning throughout life. Here are a few simple ways to help kids become eager readers:

Start with your child's picks. Comics or joke books may not be your first choice to cultivate literacy, but they can motivate kids to read.

Don't worry that these texts may not be substantial enough. They can play important roles in helping kids understand some fundamentals, like how events take place in a sequence and stories are laid out. They also help build vocabulary and show that books can be visually appealing. Once your child becomes comfortable with the experience of reading, you can encourage other literature selections with a variety of challenging content.

Read and reread and reread. Many kids reach for the same books over and over again. That's OK. Through repetition kids can master the text and eventually sail through it with ease and confidence. Each new reading of the book may also help them understand it just a little better. And that positive experience may inspire them to give new books a try.

Read aloud. By reading aloud, you can help build your child's vocabulary, show that you enjoy reading for fun, and help your child connect sounds with letters on the page. Above all, reading aloud provides together time that you'll both enjoy. And it doesn't have to end once kids get older. The comfort of a parent's

voice and undivided attention is something kids never outgrow.

Create opportunities to read and write beyond the pages.

Provide kids with many rewarding chances to read every day. Write notes and leave them on a pillow, in a lunchbox, or in a pocket. Ask friends and relatives to send postcards and letters. Leave magnetic letters and words on the refrigerator, and you may find kids spontaneously creating words, sentences, and stories. On road trips or errands, play word games that strengthen language skills. You might try "I Spy" ("I spy something that starts with an 'a' ...") or games where you pick a category like "food" and then everyone has to name foods that begin with a certain letter. Kids often like reading signs seen while you're on the road, like those on restaurants.

Get help if you're worried. If you're concerned about your child's ability or willingness to read, don't wait to get help. Consult with your child's doctor or teacher. If they share your concern, they may be able to suggest resources to help your child become an eager reader.

Taken in part from:

Diederich, Gail. Aug 2007. *Helping Reluctant Readers*. Retrieved on January 28, 2010 from http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/all_reading/readers.html

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Ready to Learn**—“Nursery Rhymes”—April 21st at the Utah County Health Dept (UCHD), Rm. 1600 from 12-1 p.m. Songs and rhymes for young children have been passed down for generations. They're fun, children love them and they provide a warm nurturing experience between parent and child. What we may not be aware of as we say simple nursery rhymes or sing songs with them is their ENORMOUS educational value. This interactive workshop demonstrates how PBS shows use nursery rhymes to teach and how parents and teachers can benefit too.
- **Provo City Library**—
 - ☞ “Book Babies” every Friday from 10-10:30 a.m. for infants 0-12 mos.
 - ☞ “Mother Goose Time” every Friday from 11-12pm for 1 year olds. Age appropriate songs, stories, and activities for baby and their parents/caregivers.
- **Orem City Library**—
 - ☞ “Laptime” every Tues, Wed, & Thur at 10am in Hogwarts' Corner. A 20 min. program for babies, toddlers & their caregivers with songs, fingerplays & short stories to introduce our youngest patrons to the world of words.
 - ☞ “Storytime” every Tues, Wed, & Thurs at 10:30am in the Storytelling Wing. A 30 min. program for preschoolers & young school age children with stories, puppets & activities to engage youngsters & highlight the joys of books & storytelling.