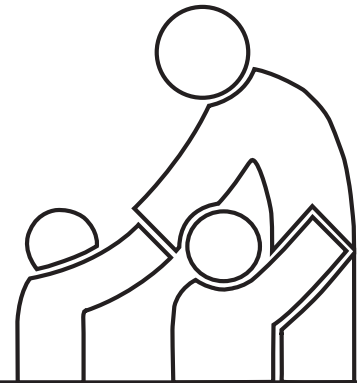


Family Times

NEWSLETTER



A NEWSLETTER FOR ADULTS WITH CHILDREN AGES 5-8

VOL. 1 / NO. 2

Becoming Your Child's Reading Partner

One of the best parenting experiences is reading with a child. When reading together is relaxed and enjoyable for both the child and adult, it creates important bonding time and it motivates a child's interest in learning.

Children's Literacy Development

Reading is important for all learning. Literacy begins at birth and develops during a process of learning to understand and use language. Children first learn spoken forms of language – listening and speaking – and then begin to make sense of written forms – reading and writing.

All children need support to become good readers. Because children develop differently, some need more help and practice in learning to read. For a child who is struggling with a skill, encourage what the child can do. To motivate a child with little interest in reading, find material on things they enjoy – hunting, fishing, cooking, comics, or animals.

The Reading Partner

Reading with a child is a process of partnering with that child. The goals are to motivate the child to read and to provide opportunities to practice

reading. A partner helps the child develop reading skills, understand what they are reading, and learn to love reading. When reading with a child remember to be caring, flexible, realistic, encouraging, and committed.

To Make a Difference

- Talk with children..
- Read to and with children.
- Help children read on their own.
- Write for children – take dictation.
- Help children write on their own.
- Create and display art related to reading.
- Make books..
- Have lots of books available.
- Let children see you reading.
- Most important, make reading fun!

Talking with Children

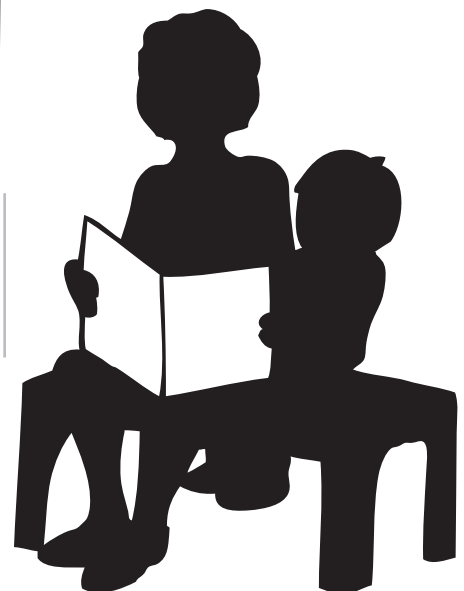
"When you take the time to read with a child, you send a strong message that both reading and the child are important."

Talking is a part of the circle that supports a child's learning to read and write. Early conversation with children in the home is one of the first building blocks for literacy development.

Talking builds a child's speaking skills, vocabulary, and confidence. You can talk with children about their everyday activities. Ask them questions and give answers to their questions. Talk with children about books.

Shared Reading – Reading WITH Children

Becoming a reading partner means shared reading WITH a child, so the child can practice reading. Shared reading is a slower pace that allows for repeated reading and questions. This helps the child become familiar with language patterns and to recognize words. Start by finding a book close to the child's reading





The Book Nook

Brown Bear, Brown Bear

by Bill Martin, Jr is a good book to read with your child.

level and something the child enjoys. Find a quiet place. With new readers, use your fingers to follow the words and the child can do the same. Offer praise and encouragement. After reading, discuss the story and do an art activity based on the book.

Shared Reading Tips

These shared reading tips help to create a positive and fun reading experience for children.

Picture Reading – partner asks questions about the book's pictures.

Sighting – partner asks the child to find letters, words, and book parts before reading.

Discovery – partner guides the child through a familiar book, asking the child to fill in the repeated phrases.

Echo – partner reads a group of words to the child, then the child reads the same words.

Unison – partner and child read aloud at the same time.

Whisper – partner reads into a child's ear while he or she reads aloud and then they change roles.

Stop-and-Go – partner reads to the child, stopping at a place that the child can read or when the child says that he or she wants to read. The child reads until ready for the partner to read again.

Solo – child reads while the partner asks questions to be sure the child understands what's being read.

Supporting Writing

Reading and writing develop together. It is important to have children write about the books they read. Creating their own written words about the book helps children make the links between reading and writing and finding meaning in words. To encourage children to write, provide real reasons for writing. Real reasons to write are journals, letters, notes, labels, lists, names, stories, play scripts, and books.

References

Collins, R. (1998). *Reading Helpers: A Guide for Training Tutors*, The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, Corporation for National Service 97-783-1252, Washington, DC.

Rush, K.L. (1999). Caregiver-child interactions and early literacy development of preschool children from low-income environments. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 19, 3-14.

Tucson Unified School District (2004). *Balanced literacy handbook*. Retrieved January 26, 2005, from instech.tusd.k12.az.us/balancedlit/handbook.

Youth Literacy Team (2006). *Reading Partner Training Guide*, West Virginia University Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Program Unit, Morgantown, WV.

Selecting Good Books

Resource books at your public library can help you find good books to read with children:

- *Books Kids Will Sit Still For*, Judy Freeman
- *Choosing Books for Children: A Common Sense Guide*, Betsy Hearne
- *How to Choose Good Books for Kids*, Kate H. McMullan
- *The New York Times Parent Guide to the Best Books for Children*, Eden Ross Lipson

This issue was written by Margaret Miltenberger, Mineral County WVU Extension Agent. Reviewed in 2007.

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