



FACTS ABOUT FAMILY LITERACY

Early positive interactions with adults help form the basis for success in school, work and life. When a parent or caregiver reads a story to or talks with a child, a connection is made in the child's brain. That connection is reinforced with repetition. Repetition is how children learn, and it is a critical part of a child's journey to making knowledge permanent. Each time children hear the same story, they can learn something new from it.

Source: Better Brains for Babies. www.bbbgeorgia.org

Family participation in literacy activities provides valuable developmental experiences for young children. In addition to developing an interest in reading, children who are read to, who are told stories, and who visit the library, may start school better prepared to learn than those who are not exposed to such activities. Engaging young children in literacy activities at home also enables parents and other family members to become active participants in their children's education at an early age.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov>

What does sharing books accomplish?

- Sharing books helps to better prepare children to develop reading skills.
- Sharing books provides fun and enjoyment for both children and adults.
- Sharing books helps create a strong bond between parents and children.
- Sharing books introduces children to art through the book's illustrations.
- Sharing books enhances children's listening skills.
- Sharing books introduces children to a wide variety of experiences.
- Sharing books improves and enriches the quality of children's lives.

Source: Born to Read, How to Raise a Reader: www.ala.org/alsc/raise_a_reader.html

When and how do I share books with my child?

- Begin when your child is born and spend time reading every day.
- Sing to your baby or repeat nursery rhymes.
- Visit the library. Ask about storytimes. Borrow books to share with your baby at home.
- Read or tell stories in the language you are most comfortable with.
- Choose books with colorful pictures and simple words — or no words at all.
- Read with interest and expression — or just tell the story in your own words.
- Hold the book so your child can see the pictures clearly.
- Let your baby play with the book.
- Encourage your toddler to point out objects, repeat words, and talk about the story.
- Help your child stay actively involved with a story and develop reading comprehension. Instead of reading the story straight through, ask your child open-ended questions about the story: "Why do you think Goldilocks ate Baby Bear's porridge?" "What do you think will happen next?"
- Help your child understand that words are made up of smaller sounds by playing games with the sounds of words and by repeating rhymes.
- Tell stories about your family and your culture.
- Encourage older children to read to their younger brothers and sisters.
- Be an example to your children; let them see you read books too.

Source: Born to Read, How to Raise a Reader: www.ala.org/alsc/raise_a_reader.html

What is the best way to share books?

- Find a comfortable place to sit.
- Turn off distractions, such as the computer, television, radio and stereo.
- Hold the book so your child can see each page clearly.
- Involve your child by having him or her point out and identify objects.
- Talk about the pictures in the book or repeat common words to help your child understand them.
- Read with expression and with interest.
- Have your child select books for you to read together.
- Reread your child's favorite books whenever you are asked.

Source: *Born to Read, How to Raise a Reader*: www.ala.org/alsc/raise_a_reader.html

What types of books can be shared with infants and toddlers?

- Books with rhyme, rhythm, and repetition
- Books with pictures of other babies
- Books with "parent appeal"
- Poetry books
- Books with textures or touch and feel books
- Mother Goose and nursery rhyme books
- Concept books (such as alphabet books)
- Books that feature familiar items or events in baby's world
- Books that feature sounds
- Books babies can manipulate, such as lift the flap books or books with holes (12 - 18 months)
- Books of different sizes and shapes (18-30 months)

Source: <http://libraries.idaho.gov/node/384>

Reading aloud to children has been called the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for success in reading. Reading aloud — with children participating actively — helps children learn new words, learn more about the world they live in, learn more about written language (sometimes more than one language!), and see the connections between words that are spoken and words that are written.

Source: *National Institute for Family Literacy*, www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications.html

If 30 minutes of daily reading begins in infancy, by the time your child is 5 years old, he or she will have been fed roughly 900 hours of "brain food"! A kindergarten student who has not been read to could enter school with less than 60 hours of "literacy nutrition." No teacher — no matter how talented — can make up for those lost hours of mental nourishment.

Source: www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_feedme.html

Reading aloud to young children is so critical that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that doctors prescribe reading activities along with other advice given to parents at regular check-ups. Many pediatricians believe that a child who has never held a book or listened to a story is not a fully healthy child.

Source: *America Reads*, www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families_raising.html



For more information, visit www.georgialibraries.org or contact Children's Services; Georgia Public Library Service; 1800 Century Place, Suite 150; Atlanta, GA 30345-4304; 404.235.7200.