



Getting Ready for School: Reading with Your Child Every Day

Reading books aloud with children in any language can introduce them to new information, expand their imaginations and build their vocabulary. When your child sits with you and listens to a book you are sharing, you are strengthening your parent-child relationship.

Why is this important for school readiness?

Reading develops children's language skills. If your family is multilingual, reading to your children in your home language will help them become better readers in both your home language and English. Books use words that you may not use every day with your child. Reading helps expand your child's vocabulary.

Reading exercises your child's brain. Research shows that specific areas of the brain are affected when children are read to on a regular basis from an early age. These areas include memory, problem-solving, emotion, thinking and behavior regulation.

When children are read to, they develop knowledge about the world as well as learn new words. The more they know about, the more questions they will ask and the more successful they will be in school, not just literacy, but in all areas.

Reading develops a child's imagination and creativity. As children hear a story, they imagine the characters, the setting and what will happen next.

The act of reading with a child can build a stronger bond between the child and parent because they are

What can families do to help?

spending time together, sitting together, reading and talking.

- ❖ Reading TO a child is not the same as reading WITH a child. When you reading with your child, you have conversations about the book, predict what's happening next and enjoy the experience together.
- ❖ Visit your public library and get a library card. Many libraries have a selection of books that can be accessed online and read from a digital device. Libraries also have many family activities that are free. Be certain to check out the calendar of events at your local library.
- ❖ Set up a cozy area in your home with a basket of books, a comfortable seat and some favorite stuffed animals for your child to "read" to.



- ❖ Let your child take the lead in choosing books that are interesting to him or her. If you are not familiar with a book your child selects, first look at the pictures in the book before you read it aloud to make sure it is not violent.
- ❖ Include non-fiction books. Books that include real pictures can expose a child to new things he or she may never have seen before.

