

Reading Tips for Parents

Benefits of Reading to Children

Even babies and young children enjoy books and learn from sharing books with adults. Make it part of your regular bedtime routine to turn off the TV for a few minutes and share books.

Some benefits of reading to babies and young children:

- Sharing books with babies and young children can help them learn talk and improve language skills.
- Sharing books can help young children get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Regular bedtime routines started with babies and young children help prevent future bedtime struggles.
- Teaching children how to fall asleep alone by putting them in bed awake helps prevent future night wakings.



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Age-Specific Tips

6 to 8 Months Old	
<p>At age 6 to 8 months, babies can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold onto a book and pat the pictures. • Taste a book. • Copy some of the sounds you say and the looks on your face. • Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Name and point to the pictures your baby shows interest in. • Help your baby turn pages. • Act out pictures using your face, hands and voice. • Enjoy a game of copying your baby playing with books.
9 to 11 Months Old	
<p>At age 9 to 11 months, babies can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach for one of two books you offer to them. • Hold onto a book and pat the pictures. • Taste a book. • Copy some of the sounds you make and the looks on your face. • Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Name and point to the pictures your baby is touching or looking at. • Help your baby turn pages. • Act out pictures using your face, hands and voice. • Enjoy a game of copying your baby playing with books.
12 to 14 Months Old	
<p>At age 12 to 14 months, babies can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a book to share. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to pictures they like in a book. • Imitate some animal sounds when they look at a picture of that animal. • Imitate your reactions to the book you are enjoying together. • Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the pictures your child is pointing to or looking at. • Help your child turn pages. • Ask your child questions he or she can answer by pointing, such as: "Where's the dog?" or "Where's the happy baby?" or "Who says 'meow'?" • Imitate the sounds your child makes while looking at a picture. Then add a very short phrase, such as "'Moo.' The cow says 'moo.'"
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15 to 17 Months Old

<p>At age 15 to 17 months, young children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a book to share. • Look at favorite pictures and make their own sounds for some of them. • Point to an animal and make that animal's sound. • Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time. • Laugh, squeal and jabber while enjoying a favorite book with you. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Name and say a few words about the pictures your child is pointing to or looking at. • Imitate the sound or words your child says while looking at a picture. Then add a few more words like: "Yes, eyes. The girl has pretty eyes." • Make up games, while looking at pictures, like: "Where's the girl's nose? Where's Mommy's nose? Where's your nose?" • Name and then demonstrate actions in a book, such as "Laughing. Look at the boy laughing." Then laugh with your child!
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18 Months to 2 Years Old

<p>At age 18 to 23 months, young children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a book to share and tell you they want "more book" or "another book." • Point to a favorite picture and say a word or two about it. • Look at familiar animals and make their sounds. • Finish some sentences from books they know very well, such as: "Happy faces. Sad..."(faces) or "Big cat, little hat. Big hat, little..." (cat). • Enjoy a trip to your local public library for "story time" or to borrow some books. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Help your child pronounce words better by imitating their word, then pronouncing it correctly and using it in a short phrase. • Help your child understand by speaking in slow, short sentences and waiting for your child to take a turn talking. • Use book sharing as a way to calm and comfort your child.
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2 Years Old

<p>At age 2, children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a book to share. • Enjoy sharing the same book over and over and over again. • Repeat some of the words and 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Use book sharing as a way to calm and comfort your child. • Start a conversation by repeating an important
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<p>phrases you say or read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask you questions, such as, "What's that?" • Enjoy a trip to your local public library for "story time" or to borrow some books. 	<p>word your child has just said. For example, you could say: "Balloon. Lots of balloons. The girl has lots of balloons." Then wait for your child to say something more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Count pictures and wait for your child to repeat the numbers after you. • Respond with enthusiasm to your child's questions and comments.
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3 Years Old

<p>At age 3, children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name the books they want to share with you. • Pretend to read a favorite book to you. • Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done. • Ask you questions about books you are enjoying together. • Correct you if you skip a page in a favorite book. • Tell you the story from a favorite book in their own words. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside 10 to 20 minutes for sharing books as part of a regular bedtime routine. • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story. • Respond with enthusiasm to your child's questions and comments. • Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You can say, "Can you find all the blue things?" or "Show me all the things that can fly." • Point out colors, shapes and numbers in their books. • Take your child to your local library to borrow books or to enjoy "story time."
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4 Years Old

<p>At age 4, children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell you which books they want to share with you. • Pretend to read a favorite book to you. • Tell you how a story is like things they have seen or done. • Ask you questions about books you are enjoying together. • Correct you if you skip a word or page in a favorite book. • Tell you the story from a favorite book in their own words. 	<p>What you can do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside 20 to 30 minutes for sharing books as part of a regular bedtime routine. • Find a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing. • Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story. • Respond with enthusiasm to your child's questions and comments. • Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You can say, "Can you find all the blue things?" or "Show me all the things that can fly." • Point out colors, shapes, numbers and letters in books. • Take your child to your local public library to borrow books or to enjoy "story time."
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The information in this guide is provided by the Read To Me Program at Hasbro Children's Hospital.