

How can I help my child learn to read?

Six tips to helping your child become a successful reader!

Tip 1 – Talk to Your Child: Oral language is the foundation for reading. Talking and singing teach your child the sounds of language, making it easier for him or her to learn how to read.

- Ⓢ Tell family stories about yourself, your child's grandparents, and other relatives.
- Ⓢ Talk to your child as much as possible about things you are doing and thinking.
- Ⓢ Ask your child lots of questions.
- Ⓢ Encourage your child to tell you what he or she thinks or feels.
- Ⓢ Ask your child to tell you about his or her day – about activities and games played.
- Ⓢ Be patient! Give your child time to think of the words he or she wants to use.
- Ⓢ Sing songs, such as the alphabet song, and recite nursery rhymes together.
- Ⓢ Play rhyming and riddle games.

Tip 2 – Make Reading Fun!!!!

- Ⓢ Read with drama and excitement! You can use different voices for different characters in the story! You can use your child's name instead of a character's name! You can also make sock puppets and use them to act out a story!
- Ⓢ Re-read your child's favorite stories as many times as your child wants to hear them. Choose books that your child enjoys.
- Ⓢ Read stories that have repetitive parts and encourage your child to join in.
- Ⓢ Point to words as you read them. This will help your child make a connection between the words he or she hears you say and the words on the page.
- Ⓢ Read all kinds of material – stories, poems, information books, magazine and newspaper articles, and comics.
- Ⓢ Subscribe to a magazine for your child. Children love receiving mail!

Tip 3 – Read Every Day!!: Reading can be a part of your routine that you and your child can look forward to every day. By taking the time to read with your child, you show him or her that reading is important and fun to do. Try to read with your child as often as possible. It's the best thing you can do to help your child learn at school! It also allows you to spend time together!

- Ⓢ Start reading with your child when he or she is very young.
- Ⓢ Set aside a special time each day when you can give your full attention to reading with your child.
- Ⓢ Choose a comfortable spot to read, where you can be close to your child. Make it your "reading place"! Set aside a special shelf in that area for your child's books.
- Ⓢ Choose a variety of books.
- Ⓢ Vary the length of reading time according to your child's age and interests. For young children, several short sessions (of 10 minutes each) may be better than one long session (of 30 minutes).
- Ⓢ Read slowly so that your child can form a mental picture of what is happening in the story.
- Ⓢ Praise your child for his or her ideas and participation!
- Ⓢ When you and your child are away from home, take along books, magazines, and books-on-tape for your child to read and listen to.
- Ⓢ Keep reading to your child even after he or she has learned to read. By reading stories that will interest your child but that are above his or her reading level, you can stretch your child's understanding and keep alive the magic of shared reading.

Tip 4 – Set an Example: Share many daily reading activities with your child.

- Ⓢ Read recipes, schedules, maps, instructions, and travel brochures.
- Ⓢ Read traffic signs and signs in stores and restaurants.
- Ⓢ Look up information in cookbooks, car manuals, phone books, and dictionaries.
- Ⓢ Read greeting cards, letters, and e-mail messages to and from relatives and friends.

Tip 5 – Talk about books!: Talking about the books you read is just as important as reading them. Discussing a story or a book with your child helps your child understand it and connect it to his or her own experiences.

- Ⓢ Talk to your child about your favorite books from childhood, and offer to read them.
- Ⓢ Encourage your child to ask questions and to comment on the story and pictures in a book – before, during, and after reading it.
- Ⓢ Look at the cover and the title of a book with your child, and ask your child what he or she thinks might happen in the story.
- Ⓢ Encourage your child to think critically about the story. Does he or she agree or disagree with the author? Why?
- Ⓢ Think out loud as you read, and encourage your child to do the same. Always ask WHY questions! (Why do you think.....)
- Ⓢ Give your child time to think about the story, and then ask him or her about it again a few days later.

Tip 6 – Listen to your child read!: As your child learns to read, listen to him or her read aloud. Reading to you gives your child a chance to practice and to improve his or her reading skills. Be enthusiastic and praise your child as often as you can. If possible, be specific with your praise so that your child knows what he or she is doing well.

- Ⓢ Show your child that you are enjoying the story by indicating interest and by asking questions.
- Ⓢ Give your child time to figure out tricky words, and show your child how he or she can learn from mistakes.
- Ⓢ Try to have your child read aloud to you at times when there will be no interruptions.
- Ⓢ Make sure that your child selects books that aren't too difficult.
- Ⓢ Take turns reading with your child, especially if he or she is just beginning to read, or try reading together.
- Ⓢ Talk about a story after your child has read it, to make sure that he or she understands it.