

Make Reading Fun



Children take their first steps towards language well before they talk. Your talking, singing and story telling and your child's playful experiences with books are the building blocks for communicating, reading and writing. Here are some simple ways you and your child can enjoy books together:

With Infants:

- **Help them touch books and turn the pages.** Are there things to touch on the pages? Talk about what you see.
- **Bring books everywhere.** Keep small books in your car, purse and stroller and pull them out on the bus, while waiting at a doctor's office or when standing in a line.
- **Read and play with books every day.** Make it a fun and special time. Read the same story before naps or bedtime. You don't have to finish the story. Stop when your baby loses interest.
- **Point to interesting pictures as you read.** Describe them. Explain what you see. Play peek-a-boo with the pictures by covering and uncovering them with your hand.

What kinds of books are best?

- **Picture books with simple objects or faces**
- **Board or cloth books with pages that turn easily and won't tear**
- **Books with soft, rough or bumpy textures to touch and feel**

With Toddlers and Preschoolers:

- **Ask your child to point to pictures or to name things on the pages.** Make it into a game. Describe something in the picture and see if your child can find it.
- **Have him tell the story.** Let him tell his own version or leave out words to well known stories so he can fill them in.
- **Share new words.** Use the pictures in your child's books to help explain a new word. Ask a question to make sure she understands.
- **Talk about the story.** Ask questions about what happened before, what is happening now and what might happen on the next page. "What hat did he choose? What is he doing with the hat? Where will he put it next?" Pause frequently to let your child talk.

What kinds of books are best?

- **Books on topics your child is interested in, like animals, dinosaurs or ballerinas**
- **Nursery rhymes or simple stories about everyday activities**
- **Stories with only one or two sentences per page and lots of pictures**

*Born Learning*SM is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers and communities create early learning opportunities for young children. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, *Born Learning* educational materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at www.bornlearning.org.

