

Parenting Future Readers

No. 11 (Month 33-34)

Why Read Aloud to Children?

- ❖ Increases vocabulary and helps children learn the structure and rules of language.
- ❖ Provides knowledge about the world, so children understand more and learn easier.
- ❖ Gives children a good feeling about books and reading because of the special closeness of sharing books together.
- ❖ Shows children that parents (their superheroes) value reading. Children love to imitate their parents.
- ❖ Shows children how books are read and that printed words have meaning.



- ❖ Makes learning to read easier. Reading aloud is more effective than work sheets, flash cards and other teaching tools.
- ❖ Increases children's later success in school!

Did you know?

We suggest that you stay away from flash cards. You are more effective - and its more fun - to make language learning a part of your everyday activities.

What you can do.

Read "on the go." Children learn to read by reading stop signs, cereal boxes, billboards, street signs, and other words that are part of their normal surroundings. You can help by reading these things out loud when you see them, until your child learns them.

Books for Parents:

The Read-Aloud Handbook, by Jim Trelease (New York: Penguin Books), 2001. This book provides parents with a list of books appropriate for children of different ages.

Literacy Begins at Birth, by Marjorie Fields (Tucson, Arizona: Fisher Books), 1989.

What You Can Do

- ❖ Read daily to your child!
- ❖ Ask questions before and during the story about what the book might be about, what might happen next, how the characters feel, or what they are doing and why, etc. But then...
- ❖ Engage your child with talk and questions that move beyond the immediate story. Researchers call this **dialogic reading**, and it really helps children learn. It engages the child's thinking.
- ❖ Honor your child's request to read favorite books "over and over." This makes your child feel good, helps him learn, and encourages discussions.
- ❖ Relate what happens in stories to events in your child's life. Children who have seen ducks at the park will be able to better understand the story *Make Way for Ducklings*.
- ❖ Read a variety of books to expose your child to different ideas and words. Select books that interest your child.



- ❖ Build your child's book collection - shop garage sales, make your own books, ask relatives and friends to give books as presents.
- ❖ Visit your local library each week for story hour and to check out books.
- ❖ Move your finger as you read the words, sometimes, so your child sees how you read.
- ❖ Match reading time to fit your child's attention span. When your child loses interest it's time to stop.
- ❖ Enjoy reading to your child!

Visit the public library with your child. They have lots of picture books. You will be surprised how much fun you have together, selecting books to take home.