



Circles of Learning

Education Health Environment Community Creativity

Tips to encourage early reading

Read aloud to your child

This is valuable time for you and your child. The child becomes engrossed in the story and sound of the words and he/she has your full attention. Make the reading fun and imaginative, you can add different voices for different characters. The imagination that stories build creates a desire for children to want to read themselves.

Rhyming verse

Children love to hear language that rhymes and text that repeats itself. When looking for suitable books pick up some rhyming ones and when you read aloud, ensure that you bring emphasis to sound of the rhyming words. If it is a song, then sing the words.

Explain the meanings

If you feel there could be some confusion about the meaning, explain a word or phrase. Each child has their own standard of comprehension and the author of the book is writing it to only one standard.

Create your own stories

Creating your own stories is fun and can be very valuable in dealing with any trauma in your child's life e.g. the death of a relative, separation, moving.

Creating a story around animals removes it from your personal situation and your child will empathise with the animal whose feelings have been hurt.

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Bring a positive ending for the animal in your story so your child can see that life goes on and things will get better.

If you only have a small book and you want to read longer, expand a story by adding in adjectives and even an extra character.

Just for fun, you can create your own stories with your child, taking turns to see where the story goes.

We advise you give an ending, so there is a finish line e.g. “and the dragon went back to his cave and slept soundly”. Start with “Once upon a time...” and the next person can say whatever comes into their head, the dragon is introduced and an adventure proceeds.

This is great for the whole family, regardless of age, and great for long car trips or rainy days.

Draw the story

This is a great way to see how your child has comprehended what you have read. Using coloured pencils, ask your child to draw on a piece of paper any situation or the characters in the book you have just read. This is another way to bring about balance in the brain, by combining creativity with the intellectual, to enhance learning.