

15 Ways to Help Your Child with Reading



1. Reading is a skill, and it gets better with practice. Research shows that kids who spend as little as 30 minutes a day reading books, magazines, and newspapers are more likely to become good readers. Encourage your children to spend some time reading everyday.
2. Help your children get the library habit. Set aside time each week to visit your local public library. While you're there, check out a book yourself. You'll be setting a powerful example of the importance of reading for your children.
3. Make reading easy. If your TV is within easy reach, but books are stored on a high shelf, you can probably guess how your kids will spend their free time. But if they have their own bookshelf filled with interesting books, and TV time must be scheduled in advance, they'll pick up a book.
4. Read aloud to your children. Try to set aside time every day for reading aloud. You can start with just 10 minutes a day.
5. Stop before the end of the story. Ask you child to predict what she thinks may happen next.
6. Give your children a wide range of experiences, which are the foundation for understanding what they read. Taking your children on picnics or trips to a nearby park can provide learning.
7. Do you remember how hard it was to put away a good book just because it was bedtime? Did you bring a flashlight to bed to try to sneak in a few extra pages? Why not relax your family's bedtime rules once a week?
8. Look for unusual places for your daily reading time with your children.
9. In addition to read-aloud time, some families schedule a time when everyone says, "Oh D-E-A-R." It doesn't mean something's gone wrong. Instead, they've agreed to Drop Everything And Read.
10. Too busy to schedule read-aloud times? Read at breakfast, bathtub time, and time in the car with books on tape.
11. Start a family library so that your child's favorite books can be enjoyed again and again.
12. Plan a book swap for your child's school. Admission: two or three used books. Give children a ticket for each book they turn in. Then allow them to exchange tickets for books other children have brought. This way, kids can pass on the books they've outgrown... and enjoy some "new" books at the same time.
13. How can you tell whether a book is on your child's reading level? Some educators suggest using the "rule of thumb." Have your child read a page of the book aloud. Have her hold up one finger for each word she does not know. If she holds up four fingers and a thumb before the end of the page, the book is probably too hard for her to read alone. It might be a good book to read aloud.
14. For a very early reader, you can turn your whole house into a reading lesson. Make labels for everything your child sees and uses.
15. Limit the amount of TV your child watches. Some families give their children "TV tickets," each good for 30 minutes of television time. When the tickets are gone, the set is turned off for the week.