



Literacy from Birth – Building a foundation for life-long learning

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Reading aloud and sharing books with your baby:

Sitting with your baby in your lap, sharing a book – it is a special time. You feel connected. Your baby is happy to be in your arms and feels safe. And so much is happening inside your baby's brain! Your baby's brain is growing and growing with each turn you both take in this "conversation". You don't have to be a perfect reader yourself – you can still give this gift to your baby. Look at the book together, talk about the pictures together, and stop to talk about the pages your baby likes. These are the things that help build your baby's brain. Your baby can take turns in this conversation long before they are talking. They can take turns by looking, patting or turning the pages, pointing, making sounds, laughing, or clapping. When you spend time reading with your baby, you are helping them learn to love books. You are starting them on their own road to literacy.

Your baby grows and becomes a toddler! Your toddler will begin talking to you about the book and what they see. They might make animal sounds or name some of the animals they see. They are excited about books and spending time with you. When they play with books, turn pages, or point to pictures, they are showing early signs of reading.

It takes just 15 minutes a day, every day, of sharing books and reading aloud to help build your baby's brain and encourage a love of reading.

Reading aloud and sharing books with your preschooler:

Keep the conversation going! Your child is busy building their vocabulary. They are learning more and more new words every day. Books connect your child to the world – you can talk about things that don't happen every day. Books help them think about new ideas like feelings and solving problems. Books help them build their attention. Your child might bring you their favourite book to read over and over again – it might feel old to you, but they are learning something each time you share that book. It takes just 15 minutes a day, every day, of sharing books and reading aloud to help build your child's brain and inspire a love of reading.

Reading aloud and sharing books with your older child:

Don't stop reading aloud to your child just because they are learning to read themselves. Sometimes they need a break from learning to read and a chance to relax and let their imagination soar. That's where you come in! Reading aloud with them gives them that break. They can experience a book they might not be ready to read themselves. Make reading together a daily routine, maybe after school or after dinner. Include the whole family! You can continue to foster their love of reading by making time for it.

It takes as little as 15 minutes a day, every day, of reading aloud to help strengthen your child's vocabulary and sense of the world.

To learn more – links to reading tips and activities for all ages:

- <https://childrensliteracy.ca/Tips-Resources>
- <http://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Early-Literacy-Corner.aspx>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kcs191c17c&feature=youtu.be>