

What can I do to help my child read?

Here are a few ideas to support your child's **early reading** at home:

- Read your child a bedtime story
- Allow your child to choose the book they want; it is quite normal for children to repeatedly choose a favourite!
- Don't be shy, do the voices!
- Make stories fun and exciting; laugh, smile, look scared, look sad, sound excited, etc.
- Run your finger under the words as you read.
- Ask a question or two, for example "What do you think will happen next?", "Who do you think will solve the problem?"
- Stop and talk about some of the pictures and characters.

Even when your child becomes an independent reader, sharing bedtime stories will enable your child to enjoy literature. Sharing stories will also extend their vocabulary, improve their comprehension and it is also an enjoyable experience for both parents and children alike. Often these shared stories are memories that children carry with them for life.

- Join the library and widen their choice of books.
- Let your child see you reading and talk about what texts you enjoy.
- Spend ten minutes a day reading with your child, this will include their reading book, but not exclusively.
- Read signs, labels and captions found in everyday life.

How do I help my child read their 'reading book'?

Books without words:

- Find a quiet place away from other interruptions,
- Look at the front cover and talk about what they think the story is about,
- Look at each picture carefully and talk about what is happening,
- Talk about the characters and where the story is set,
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement.

Talking about stories is very important and helps develop a child's reading skills. Children use pictures to help them read. Books without words help children think about stories and what happens on each page. These books encourage children to use the pictures to work out what is happening. In the future, these skills will help them read the words on the page and more importantly understand their meaning.

Books with words and sentences:

When starting to read, children should put their finger underneath each word as they read.

If they get stuck on a word:

- Ask them to look at the first letter of the word,

- Encourage sounding out each phoneme to build the word and blend the sounds together,
- Use the clues in the picture,
- Use the context of the sentences to work it out, i.e. miss the word out and read to the end of the sentence, what word would make sense?
- Don't spend too long on a difficult word, it is OK for you to give the word sometimes. You can go back later to reread the tricky bit. Try to keep the story flowing so you can both enjoy reading together.

Try to be positive and praise your child for their effort and achievement, even if they do not read the whole book fluently!

After reading:

Talk about similar experiences your child might have had. "Do you remember when you ..." "It's just like when you..."

Talk about the story afterwards. "Which bit did you like?" "Wasn't it funny when ..."

At the front and back of each reading book there is a parent's guide. Please refer to these pages prior to starting the book as they will give you tips on how to help your child read and engage with the text.