

Family MATTERS[®]

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Reading to Young Children

Active Kids

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Young children love to snuggle on your lap. Plus they enjoy listening to you read a book. One of the most important activities for building a child's academic success is reading aloud to children. Reading aloud is an easy way to turn children into lifelong learners. Here are some general tips for selecting books to read to young children.

Talk to your infant and toddler. It helps them learn to speak and understand the meaning of words. Even babies enjoy books. You should read to your baby every day starting at six months of age. Infants usually like books:

- With photos of other babies
- That are brightly colored to touch

- That has pages that are heavy, durable, and laminated
- With photos of common objects like balls and bottles
- Sharing books with toddlers will help them learn to talk. Toddlers usually like books:
 - That are sturdy to carry
 - With photos of children doing everyday things like playing, sleeping, or eating
- About going to sleep for bedtime
- About saying hello or goodbye



- With only a few words on each page
- With simple rhymes or repetition
- About animals

Sharing books with preschoolers can help them get ready to listen and learn in school. Preschoolers usually like books:

- That tell stories
- About kids their age
- About making friends
- About going to school or the doctor
- About having brothers or sisters
- That have simple text preschoolers can memorize

Tips for Parents to get young children interested in reading:

- Create a quiet, comfortable place for book sharing.
- Read aloud at least 15 minutes a day to your child. The time and attention you give your child has many benefits.
- Help the baby or child turn pages.
- Talk about the book you are reading with your child.
- Ask the child questions they can answer by pointing. For example: "Where is the cat?" or "Where is the Mommy?" or "Who says moo?"
- Copy the sound or words the child says while looking at a picture.
- Help the child understand by speaking in slow, short sentences.
- Keep books and other reading materials where your child can find them. Encourage a wide variety of reading materials.
- Use puppets and stuffed animals to help tell stories.
- Help your child see that reading is important. Set a good example by showing your child how you read everyday for fun (books, newspapers, magazines).
- Go to the library every few weeks. Help your child find

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age-appropriate books to check out.

- Take books everywhere you go. Have them in the car for your child to read.
- Limit the amount and type of television you and your child watch.

Healthy Snack

Strawberry Banana Smoothies

Ingredients:

2 cups Orange Juice

½ cup Low-fat vanilla yogurt

½ cup Strawberries, fresh or frozen

2 medium Banana's, cut into thirds

Directions:

1. In a blender, combine all ingredients.
2. Cover and process until blended
3. For thicker texture, add ice cubes

Other tips:

Try using other fruits that are in season.

Add ¼ cup non-fat dry milk powder before blending to increase calcium.

Try freezing left-over smoothie in ice cube tray

Easy Meals on a Budget from CSU Extension Nutrition Programs, July 2002

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By America On the Move

It's not always easy to get your child to sit down for an extended period of time, especially to read with them, but physical activity can actually improve a child's concentration and help keep them focused. If you're planning reading time for your child, get them involved in something ac-

tive beforehand, and they're more likely to be engaged in the story. You could go to the park, dance around the living room, or even take a walk to the local library for story time – whatever it may be, a little movement will make reading time that much more valuable.

For more tips on how to stay active, visit www.americaonthemove.org



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