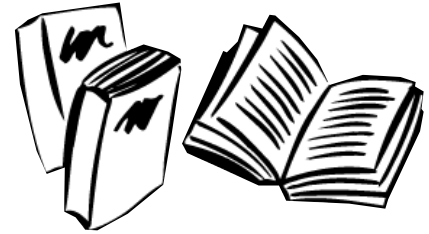


Books and reading are important for language development. Storytelling helps children develop speaking and listening skills. Most importantly, children who look at and play with books from an early age are more likely to develop a life-long love for reading. Your child is never too young to enjoy books. Birth is not too soon!



There are many ways for you and your toddler to have fun with books. Here are some suggestions:

- Young children enjoy books with simple, brightly colored pictures.
- Let your child hold the book and turn the pages. This helps your child learn how a book should be handled.
- Reading with young children works best when they choose the book and turn to the pages they want to look at. You can read or talk about the pages they choose. This helps keep their interest. Children learn best when they are interested.
- Read a book many times so that your child gets to know the story well. This lets your child help in the storytelling. One way to involve your child is to start a sentence and let your child finish it. For example, *“Once upon a time, there lived three _____.”*
- You don’t have to read a story exactly as it is written. For very young children, you can simply talk about each page with single words or short sentences. This way, your child hears the story at his level.
- Tell the story together. Take turns flipping the pages and talking about the pictures on the page. By taking turns, children learn an important skill they need to carry on conversations!
- Name things, people and actions in the pictures. Give your child time to talk about the pictures.
- Young children enjoy books that let them participate such as “lift the flap” books, pop up books, finger plays, books with things to feel and books that make sounds.

Did you know...

The public library has a variety of books for toddlers. In Edmonton, library membership is free for children under 18 years of age.

For more information, contact your community speech-language pathologist.