

Every Child Reading: Top Ten Tips for Parents

1. **Start at the beginning.** Setting the foundation for reading success is necessary before your child begins first grade, and will be crucial to academic achievement in a variety of subjects. Research shows that reading to children as early as infancy can give them a strong base for language concepts and cognitive skills related to print. Introduce your children to colorful story and picture books to foster a love of reading. Establish a routine; reading stories at bedtime is a cozy way to promote literacy. Make it interactive. Have children help turn pages and encourage them to discuss the story's plot and characters.
2. **Explore your neighborhood library together.** Take your children to the local library and introduce them to the wide selection of books, newspapers, magazines, and story telling programs that they have to offer. Also, don't forget that your library's computer provides the perfect opportunity to introduce your children to the Internet. Go online with them and show them how to do research for school projects and papers.
3. **Volunteer at your child's school.** Studies show that parent involvement is correlated with reading achievement. Given adequate training, parents can help in the classroom by volunteering to serve as tutors in the school. Support the school's literacy efforts and advocate for effective instructional materials and modern technology, including computers and access to the Internet, so that all children have excellent learning opportunities. Work through a parent organization, like the PTA, to develop and build strong relationships between parents and educators. Discuss ways that reading performance can be reinforced in the home.
4. **Write it out.** Writing gives children opportunities to use their reading competence. Support your children's creative and expository writing efforts and encourage them to keep a journal or diary so they can practice at home.
5. **Enroll your children in after-school, child care, or summer programs that cultivate and reinforce reading skills.** If your school doesn't offer these types of programs, urge the school's administrators and the school board to provide them.
6. **Be a "study buddy."** You can help your child organize information, look for key ideas in books, and practice reading out loud. Point out everyday tasks like interpreting instructions, recipes, and road signs, that require solid reading skills. Be sure to have plenty of interesting reading materials at home such as books, magazines, and newspapers to encourage your child to read more frequently. Practice makes perfect.
7. **Ask for help.** If your child is having difficulty with reading, speak with your child's educator about having the problem addressed.
8. **Support school reform.** Advocate at the local, state, and national levels for school reform efforts, like class size, teacher training, and parent involvement, which are proven to make a difference in early reading performance and other subjects.
9. **Start the day off right.** Make sure your kids are well rested, organized, and have a nutritious breakfast every day so that they arrive at school ready to learn.
10. **Rhyme to reason.** Giving children experience with rhyming is an effective way to build phonemic awareness and requires children to focus on the sounds inside words.



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