

# The Little Bookshelf

Please read to your child!



## Reading to Babies and Young Children

### Why is Reading to Babies and Young Children So Important?

Parents are the first and most important teachers young children have. Parents making books available and reading to their children every day from the time a baby is born is how babies and young children learn that reading is fun and a part of the everyday routine. Parents who read daily to their child help their child develop a love for reading and skills that will last a lifetime. Babies and young children also benefit when their parents are reading role models. When parents read newspapers, magazines and books in the home they give children positive literacy examples.

### Why Start Reading to Babies and Young Children When they are So Young?

Reading together daily to babies and young child provides many benefits.

- It offers parents a way to strengthen the parent-child bond. A warm, loving parent-child bond is critically important for children as they grow and develop.
- It helps the child develop social skills as they begin to interact with their parent while reading.
- It boosts their speech and language development. The more words children hear, the larger their vocabulary will be.
- It improves their intellectual development. The more words children hear, the greater their IQ will be.
- It develops a young child's eye muscles by looking at pictures.

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**Louisiana State University Agricultural Center:** William B. Richardson, Chancellor. **Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station:** David J. Boethel, Vice Chancellor and Director. **Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service:** Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.



## Tips for Reading to Your Baby and Young Child

- Start reading to your baby from birth every day.
- Read before naptime and before bedtime.
- Hold your baby or young child close when reading.
- Have books available in the diaper bag and car.
- Teach your baby sounds and words.
- Read slowly and in a calm, relaxed tone of voice.
- Point out interesting things in the book.
- Read with lots of expression.
- Be willing to read favorite books over and over.
- Ask your young child questions about the book.
- Let your child finish rhymes and sentences from his or her favorite books.
- As your child gets older let the youngster choose books about the things he or she loves.

## Creating a Little Bookshelf and Reading Area

1. Select age-appropriate for your baby or young child.
2. Provide variety. Include picture storybooks, participation books, informational books, books with patterns and rhythms, predictable books, wordless books, folktales and fables, poetry, nursery rhymes, alphabet books, counting books, rhyming books. Babies enjoy soft books, or sturdy board books. Toddlers and preschool children love books they can interact with such as lifting flaps, turning pages, feeling different textures, guessing what comes next and producing sounds and music with their touch.
3. Create a little bookshelf. Create a special bookshelf for your child's books. It can be a small existing shelf in your child's room or you can create a bookshelf area on top of a surface within reach of your child with bookends to hold the books upright. As your child grows older he or she can learn responsibility by helping keep their books neatly in their bookshelf.
4. Your child's library should be in a special place. Have a designated area so your child will know where the books are and will be more likely to go to that special place on his or her own. Have a comfy chair near your child's bookshelf area where you can snuggle up and read together.



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