

8 WAYS PARENTS CAN PROMOTE READING AT HOME

As a parent, you are your child's first - and most important - teacher. Here are eight ways you can help your child become a better reader.

1. **Read yourself**. Your actions really do speak louder than your words. When your kids see you reading the newspaper or curling up with a book, they will want to follow your example.
2. **Make sure your children read every day**. Reading - like shooting baskets and playing the piano - is a skill. Like other skills, it gets better with practice. Researchers have found that children who spend at least 30 minutes a day reading for fun - whether they read books, newspapers, or magazines - develop the skills to be better readers at school.
3. **Get the library habit**. Make sure everyone in your family has a library card. Schedule regular trips to the library. While you are there, check out a book yourself!
4. **Read aloud to the children**. This is the most important thing parents can do to help their children become better readers. Here are some tips:
   - Start reading to your children when they are young. It is never too early to begin reading to your children.
   - Don't stop reading to your children as they grow older. You will both enjoy the chance to do something together.
   - Set aside some time each day for reading aloud. Even 10 minutes a day can have a big impact. Bedtime is a natural reading aloud time. Other busy families read aloud at breakfast or just after dinner.
   - Read books you enjoy. Your kids will know if you are faking it.
5. **Use your newspaper to encourage reading through a scavenger hunt**. Give your child a list of things to find in today's newspaper. Here are some ideas:
   - A map of the United States.
   - A picture of your child's favorite athlete.
   - The temperature in the city where a family member lives.
   - Three words that begin with "w".
   - A movie that is playing at a nearby theater.
6. **Give books as gifts**. Then find a special place for your children to keep their own library.
7. **Make reading a privilege**. Say, "You can stay up 15 minutes later tonight if you read in bed." Or you might say, "Because you helped with the dishes, I have time to read you an extra story."
8. **If you are not a good reader, you can still encourage your children**. As your children learn to read, ask them to read to you. Talk about the books your children have read. Ask a friend or relative to read aloud to your children.

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