



NC SEEDLING

Benefits of Reading with Young Children



Study to
Explore
Early
Development

North Carolina
SEED

Story time is important for brain development. When you read with children, they are connecting the words you say to the pictures on the page and to the things in their world. Books also provide a great opportunity for back-and-forth interactions.

Story Time Tips

Short and sweet: Toddlers might not sit still. They need to move and can have shorter attention spans than babies. Go for books that are short. Read a little bit, several times a day.

Encourage engagement: Look for books with animals or machines that invite movement and sounds. Books with flaps and textures can help keep hands busy.

Create routines: Children thrive on predictability. A daily

reading routine can create consistency and a sense of stability.

Practice language: Pause during stories your child has heard many times to create an opportunity to fill in the missing word. Say, "Brown bear, brown ___" and pause to see if your child fills in the blank.



Talk about the pictures: "Look, a cat! That cat is orange. I wonder what else is orange?" This helps build language and thinking skills, even in pre-verbal children.

Use the pictures: Tell your own story or let your child to be the storyteller!

Make reading fun: Be animated, make funny sounds, or sing songs to go along with the story.

If Your Child Doesn't Like Story Time

Take small steps. If they will attend for 2 minutes, start there. Gradually increase the length of the stories.

Pick reading times when your child is likely to sit with you.

Offer a choice of books.

Follow story time with one of your child's preferred activities. For example, story time, then swing.

Provide lots of smiles, hugs, and cuddles while reading.

Try to end on a positive note, even if it means not finishing a book. Reading with children is also about building positive experiences.

UNC-CH,
Department of
Epidemiology

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NOTES

- NC has enrolled 426 families
- Together, all 6 sites have enrolled 2693 families
- Due to COVID-19, enrollment has been suspended
- Thank you for participating!



Adapted from:

<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-toddlers>

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/read-it-again-benefits-reading-young-children>