

# Reading Regularly to a Young Child with Hearing Loss



Families encourage literacy by looking at books, sharing stories, enjoying rhymes and reading aloud with their young child with hearing loss. Being read to daily at a very early age provides numerous learning and social benefits. A child's listening skills increase from frequent reading sessions. His language expands by exploring many types of stories. His thinking grows from exploring concepts presented in books. A child's conversational abilities become more complex after participating in dialogue of stories and discussions with adults about books. Families who read aloud regularly promote advances in communication, cognition, reading, writing and school skills.

The techniques outlined here will help parents enrich reading aloud experiences for their young child with hearing loss. These tips can be used in any language and communication approach. Through shared

reading a parent and child can develop a special bond with one another and the world of books. Using these powerful strategies can transform reading time into a rewarding routine filled with wonder, laughter, reassurance and learning.

### Enhance Reading Aloud by:

- Adjusting**—vary when, where and how long to read to keep a child's attention
- Choosing**—select diverse stories and types of picture books to spark curiosity
- Discussing**—promote auditory memory by recalling or reciting parts of stories
- Expanding**—relate some stories to a child's own experiences or imaginative play
- Highlighting**—emphasize certain words periodically to introduce speech sounds
- Pacing**—adopt a rate that provides time for anticipation and comprehension
- Repeating**—provide frequent opportunities to read and also re-read favorites
- Stimulating**—use expression and show enjoyment to encourage listening
- Turn-taking**—share roles for a child to point to pictures, turn pages and “read”
- Waiting**—pause often for a child to participate, think, react, ask or comment

### Beginning Stages

Reading aloud everyday nurtures a child's interest in listening.

**Parent Reads:** Start reading to babies as soon as they are born. Sing, whisper, use high and low voices, rhyme and be animated.

**Parent Reads:** Stress fun repetitious phrases or words. Use many kinds of books and include gestures, facial expressions and actions.

**Child Responds:** He might begin to develop sound awareness. He may be comforted by familiar songs and stories.

**Child Responds:** He might repeat certain sounds or words. He may start to fill in parts of phrases.

## Increasing Abilities

New and familiar books add to the excitement of language learning.

**Parent Reads:** Talk about the pictures on the cover and each page. Improve to connect with a child's interests and ideas.

**Child Responds:** He might point to pictures. He may add to what is said or ask questions.

**Parent Reads:** Ask open ended questions that can have many responses. Discuss concepts and feelings and provide background knowledge.

**Child Responds:** He might answer simple questions. He might relate the story to his own experiences.

## Continuing Skills

Story sequences and print awareness add to emerging literacy skills.

**Parent Reads:** Talk about what will happen or discuss the beginning/middle/end of a story. Expand the plot and add to vocabulary.

**Child Responds:** He might predict possibilities or change the story. He may use words from books in his conversations.

**Parent Reads:** Move a finger under print from left to right. Identify familiar letters or common letter-sound combinations when this fits with a story and a child's level.

**Child Responds:** He might spontaneously point to letters he recognizes. He may enjoy reciting rhymes and "reading" to others.

Families can start regularly reading aloud when their child is an infant and continue even after he begins to read independently. Delighting in pictures, exploring words through expression and discovering ideas in stories can contribute to a child's love of books and literacy skills used for a lifetime.