

Literacy begins at birth. **Your child was born to read.** Children develop motivation to read by being read to often. Make reading a part of your child's life!

As parents, we must tune-in and follow our child's lead during reading. Children respond to books differently at different age levels. We must adapt our response according to our child's developmental level.

Babies

- 🔍 Choose simple board books with colourful pictures.
- 🔍 Babies love touch and feel books. They also love books with pictures of babies, animals, toys, and other things that he/she sees every day.
- 🔍 Allow your child to explore the book (which includes putting it in his/her mouth!)
- 🔍 Give your baby sturdy books to look at, touch, and hold.
- 🔍 Allow your child to turn the pages, look at the pictures, and lift the flaps.
- 🔍 Notice what your baby looks at and talk about it.
- 🔍 Don't worry so much about reading the words on the page. Enjoy the pictures together. Point out pictures and provide the name (e.g. "Look, doggie!").
- 🔍 It's okay to read the same books over and over. Your child is getting lots out of the repetition.
- 🔍 Everyone loves the feeling of closeness when reading together. Reading together can be a warm, happy experience.

Toddlers

- 🔍 Share books everyday with your toddler.
- 🔍 Make reading a pleasure.
- 🔍 Allow your child to open the book and turn the pages.
- 🔍 Use lots of expression when reading (make your voice interesting and sing-songy).
- 🔍 Use pretend voices for the different characters and act out parts of the story.



- 📖 Read books with repetitive phrases. Pause and allow your child to fill in the missing word(s).
- 📖 Read rhyming books and have your child fill in the blanks to familiar rhymes. (E.g. "Jack and Jill went up the ...")
- 📖 Read favourite books again and again. Your child will probably ask you to read favourite books many times. While you might grow tired of reading the same books, children love hearing the same stories. It helps them learn new words and ways of saying things. It also helps them learn to read by hearing familiar words and seeing what they look like in print.

Preschoolers:

- 📖 Read aloud to your child everyday.
- 📖 Make book sharing time a special time.
- 📖 Pause before beginning a page, or at the end of a page, and talk about what's happening in the story.
- 📖 Ask your child to guess what might happen next. Get excited when he/she finds out whether the guess was right.
- 📖 Talk with your child about the characters in the book and how your child might feel if he/she were the main character.
- 📖 Provide your child with opportunities and the materials to draw/paint a picture about the story.
- 📖 Visit the library and allow your child to choose books he/she likes.
- 📖 Ask your child to "read" you the story.
- 📖 When you read together, connect the story to your child's life. (e.g., "The boy went fishing with his Grandpa, just like we went fishing at the cottage.")
- 📖 Answer your child's questions about the story. Listen carefully and answer his/her questions patiently. Explain things as completely as you can. When your child asks the same questions over again, keep answering because children learn from the repetition.
- 📖 When your child talks about the story, add more detail to what he/she says.
- 📖 Speak in the language that is most comfortable for you.
- 📖 Point to some of the words as you say them, especially the words that are repeated.
- 📖 Learn together by reading some non-fiction books on subjects that your child likes.

For more ideas on helping your child with talking, or if you have concerns about their speech-language development, contact the Cochrane District Early Childhood Speech and Language Service, 267-1181 (in Timmins) or 1-877-442-1212 (Cochrane District).