

Extension Update

Encourage Children to Read

During the summer, children may complain about being bored. One of the best gifts to give children is to encourage them to read. Reading adds depth to our lives and offers many hours of excitement and pleasure. Children who love reading at an early age will learn, write, and think better as they grow older. Here are some ways to encourage your child to read:

- Let your child pick the books. A big part of reading fun is choosing your own books. Allow children to read books they will like rather than those an adult thinks will be good for them.
- Offer easy-to-read books. Young children will enjoy reading more if they are given books that are not too difficult to read. New words are educational, but lots of new words on a page make reading difficult.
- Place books wherever children can be found. Keep books available wherever they sit – in the car, at the kitchen table, by the television, in their bedroom.
- Recognize that reading isn't tidy. It's better to find books everywhere than to live with children who leave their books sitting in the bookcase.
- Use the library. Help your child find books by their favorite authors and about their hobbies and interests.
- Buy books, especially for special occasions, like Christmas, birthdays, and Easter baskets. Receiving books as presents gives children the message that books are important.
- Give children time to read. There isn't time for reading if your child is over scheduled.
- Recognize that kids go through stages. There may be times when they read a lot and times when they read a little.

- Make reading a pleasure and a joy. Simply saying, “Sit down and read,” can’t make a child want to read. Some kids will then see reading as a chore. Help your child find a comfortable spot to read, with a book of their own choosing, and they too will discover the joy of reading.

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