

Ending the Day with A Story

Reading and story telling has been a part of many families' daily routine for years. Whether it is right before bed or during some other part of the day many adults have chosen to continued this tradition with their little ones. This tradition of reading aloud with your child and including it into your everyday routine has been researched and has proven to have many benefits for children.



Here are some of the benefits to reading aloud with your child.

- **Develops early language and literacy skills:** Research has found that reading aloud with your child exposes your child to a rich, diverse set of words and increases their vocabulary. A story may present new words for your child that may not typically be included in everyday conversations. Children learn word sounds, sentence structure, patterns and sequences when they read with you.
- **Activates areas in the brain:** When listening to a story even without seeing the pictures, children use their imagination to visualize the images of the story and this activates an area in the brain that processes visual association.
- **Strengthens the emotional bond between caregiver and child:** Spending time snuggle up reading with your child allows moments of one to one interaction, as you and your child read together you are both sharing each others attention and emotions.
- **Lower stress levels:** Sitting together reading a familiar book, with the person they love, can comfort a child and decrease the stress hormone, cortisol, levels in the brain.
- **Promotes a love of books and reading:** When adults read with their children frequently and with enthusiasm they model and promote a love for reading and the children therefore grow up with this love as well. Children develop positive feelings towards reading as they share that special time together.

Tips

- Make it apart of your everyday routine. Many find it easier to set a side a time before bedtime to read with their child. However, if this time of the day doesn't work that's okay. Try to find a time of the day that works best for you and your child, even if it is for a few minutes.
- Create a positive reading environment. Find somewhere that is comfortable, with limited distractions, that you both can get cozy and enjoy the story.
- Read in your home language. Read in the language that is most comfortable for you as this will provide a more authentic experience.
- Keep the reading going. Continue reading aloud with your child even when your child begins to read on their own. Older children have expressed that they still enjoy that special time with their parents and there is still much that they learn from those experiences.
- Have Fun. Reading aloud with your child should be a pleasurable time that you both enjoy.

Sources

- Home Reading Environment and Brain Activation in Preschool Children Listening to Stories. <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2015/08/05/peds.2015-0359?sid=5b1e0b71-9369-4d5e-923b-8a304e346b35>
- Literacy Promotion: An Essential Component of Primary Care Pediatric Practice. <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/134/2/404>
- Reading To Children. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/1388712>
- The Bedtime Story: A New Chapter. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324506782_The_Bedtime_Story_A_New_Chapter