

Tips for Reading to Infants and Toddlers

(National Education Association, 2006)

It's never too soon to start reading to your children! If your child learns early to associate reading with pleasure, he is more likely to enjoy reading on his own when he is older.

Try these successful reading tips for reading to infants and toddlers:

- Snuggle with your child with her favorite blanket or toys as you read.
- Read with expression using different voices for different characters.
- Emphasize rhythms and rhymes in stories. Give your toddler opportunities to repeat rhyming phrases.
- Use pictures to build vocabulary by varying objects and their colors.
- Use pictures to develop speaking vocabulary by talking about what is shown.
- Encourage your child to repeat what you say or comment on it. Encourage your child to ask questions. Provide models of interesting questions and examples of possible answers. "I wonder what is going to happen next? I think the rabbit will get lost because he is not paying attention to where he is going. What do you think?"
- Look for books that are about things that interest your toddler. For example, does your child like cars, insects, or animals?
- Make reading a habit for bedtime, after lunch, or after naptime.
- Give your child a chance to choose his own books. If your toddler chooses a book that is too long to hold her attention, read some and skip some, discussing the pictures and how they relate to the story.
- Read stories again and again. Your toddler enjoys repetition and it helps him become familiar with the way stories are organized.