

Helping your child become a reader

1. READING MATTERS !

It is a basic life skill, essential for academic success and job opportunities, but gives us so much more too - vocabulary, stories, ideas, information, imagination...

YOU are the most important person to help your child.

You are the person they look up to, you are their role model, they love you most of all. There is a lot you can do to be a *reading role model* - what you do and say and show around books and reading... And for **boys** it is especially important that they see their **dad** being a reader...

WHAT CAN I DO ?

Show your children that you think reading is important by making time for reading, being interested in your child's reading and in books, and going to the library...

Be a reading role model yourself - tell them how and what you read and why it is important to you. Have other people in the whanau show how they read too... Give boys male reading role models....

2. WE LEARN TO READ BY READING

Becoming a reader takes **TIME** and **PRACTICE**, little and often, and keeping it **FUN**... Children read more when they have **ACCESS** to books - that means books all around, time to read, and a place to read...

WHAT CAN I DO ?

- Make sure there are **books** available for your children to read...
- Make a **time** or times each day for reading - build it into your routine... before school, after school, at bedtime, in the car...
- Keep reading **fun** by having books that are easy and appealing, books that they can read and **ENJOY** so that they want to *keep on* reading.

Your **school library** is a resource for your child and for you to get LOTS of books, and public libraries are available for you too !

3. **READING ALOUD** to children is *"the single most important activity to help build the knowledge required for reading success..."*

When you read to your child, you are saying

I love you

I value my time with you

I love reading and think it is important.

Reading aloud to your children every day will help them become great readers and listeners, but most of all they will love you for doing it with them and they will remember the times you read to them all their lives !

WHAT CAN I DO ?

Read aloud with your children **every day** - 15 minutes a day - it could be in 3 lots of 5 minutes... 15 minutes is just 1% of 24 hours !

And reading the same books over (and over!) again is OK too, if you child has their favourites...

4. **TALKING** helps children become readers too.

Looking at books and talking about the pictures, talking about what you've just read, having conversations... this all helps create readers.

WHAT CAN I DO ?

Share books together - sit and look at the pictures, talk about what you see, what it makes you wonder, or reminds you of, ask some questions, count things, name things you see, explore the pictures...

Tell your children your family's own stories and encourage them to tell them to you too... *"Remember the time when we...."*

Listening to your child read

These guidelines were produced by Barbara Braxton, former Teacher-librarian, for volunteers at school who listen to young children read during one-on-one reading tutoring sessions.

They are also relevant for parents at home listening to their children read. They are provided here for schools, with Barbara Braxton's kind permission.

They are written from a child's perspective, about what "works" for them as novice readers.

Professor Marie Clay, who is acknowledged as the expert in children's early reading behaviours, says ***85% of a child's reading should be easy, familiar reading.***

Author Mem Fox believes that ***every child should hear at least 1000 stories before they go to school*** so encourage the tutor to read a story to the child so the child becomes more familiar with the language, rhythm, cadence and sounds of the language. Have them review the book they read last time and, if the child seems comfortable, invite him/her to read it again as a sort of "warm-up".

Guidelines for listening to children read

I like reading to you when:

- we have a regular time that's right for both of us so you are not distracted
- we have a quiet, comfortable place that is just for us
- we talk about the book, its title and illustrations, so I can find out what it's about. It only takes a couple of minutes and it helps me focus my thoughts on what I will expect you help me with - like finding some of the tricky words, like 'ferocious' and 'gnawed', and you tell me what they mean, before I read.
- I can hold the book for myself and turn my own page.
- you DON'T cover up the pictures. They make the book fun, and they help me to decide which reading clues to use.
- you stay as quiet as you can and only help me when I am really stuck
- you tell me when I'm doing a good job.

You can really help me when:

- you understand that I am doing the best I can. It really upsets me when you say "That's wrong, I've told you that word before, you should know it by now!" or "That's wrong, sound it out." Instead, please think of something that will help me work it out, like this: "You just read 'the fireman pulled the house off the truck and aimed it at the fire.' Does that make sense? What do you think it could be that would make sense?"
- you let me continue to read if my mistake makes sense (e.g. if I say "This is my home" when the words in the book are "This is my house") because I'm still reading for meaning.
- you learn how to help me when I do get stuck

If I have trouble you can :

- wait about 10 seconds before you interrupt. I might be thinking about it already
- tell me to get my mouth ready for the word I don't know e.g. "The boy fell into the w- - - - ." help me to think of a word that would make sense e.g. "What could the boy fall into?" remind me to look at the picture for a clue e.g. "Look where the boy fell in the picture."
- give me a clue for the meaning of the word
- read the first part of the sentence back to me e.g. "The boy fell in the"
- encourage me to read the first part of the sentence again
- say "That's right" or "Good try" and then let me continue reading so I don't lose the plot.

When we have finished you can :

- praise my efforts and my self-corrections such as, "I liked it when you went back and changed 'river' to 'water'. That was clever."
- praise my efforts for trying to make my reading interesting for you, such as "I liked the way you used a squeaky voice for the mouse."
- talk with me about our favourite parts of the story such as, "You obviously liked the part about ... Why?"
- talk with me about the pictures in the book to help me see their connection to the story and details I might have missed
- talk with me about what might have happened if
- talk with me about what might have happened next ...
- ask me questions about the characters and the plot of the book such as "How did you feel when the giant was angry? Can you find that part in the book? Did you think he deserved to get stung by the bees? Why?" This helps me really understand the story and the relationships between the characters and what happened to them. Sometimes it even helps me sort out problems in my own life! I might even feel comfortable talking to you about them.
- ask me what I might have done if I had been in that situation
- talk with me about the language in the book and new words I might have learned or not understood
- suggest other books on similar topics to the book I enjoyed.
- say something nice that will make me want to read to you again

Of course, I want to remember the magic of the story so don't ask me all these things at once, just one or two so I can think about what I have read and what I have learned.

If we are not enjoying ourselves we can :

- stop and try again another time
- take turns at reading a page each, especially if the words are really hard
- let you read while I listen
- choose another book

What should we talk about?

Talk with your child about things around them, including family events, sports, movies, books, favourite singers, TV programmes, or school. Talk about things you have done or are doing together, for example, when you're cooking, buying things in a shop, or washing the car. Share jokes or funny experiences. Talk about something your child has made, has written, or is reading.

Talk with your child about your own family traditions. Explain why things might be done differently in other families. This might include discussing an event they will be part of or talking about house rules, church, or family outings.

Accept your child's contributions and build on what they have to say. Remember that they're learning to shape their own thoughts into words and you and your family are the models.

Value your child's efforts.



How can I encourage my child to talk and listen?

Show them that you want to hear what they have to say and that you like talking with them. Listen to your child when he or she talks to you. Also:

- give your child time to answer your questions
- encourage *them* to ask questions of you or others
- encourage them to join in family discussions
- encourage them to listen to others
- show them how to talk on the phone
- show them how to ask for help at home, at school, or in other places
- teach your child songs, chants, karakia, and poems and say them together
- tell them stories. Listening to stories helps children learn about words and ideas and the way stories are made. Encourage them to contribute to the story you're telling or to tell their own story to you or to others.

If you want to know more about helping your child improve their speaking and listening skills or about your child's progress, ask their teacher. He or she will be glad to help.

Published 2000 for the Ministry of Education by Learning Media Limited, Box 1093, Wellington, New Zealand.

Website: www.learningmedia.co.nz

Photographs by Adrian Hoke

Copyright © Crown 2000

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the publisher. Item number K20107.

Scores of thousands of this material have appeared in primary, secondary, tertiary, and adult education.



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

© 2000 Education Corporation

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

How can we help our children to become better speakers and listeners?



Feed the mind
Whangaihia te hinengaro

You can help your child to become a better speaker and listener.

Get involved in your child's learning. Make it fun!

child's learning.

Why is it important for me to talk with my child?

A little time spent talking with your child and listening to what they have to say will increase their confidence and relationship skills. You'll also be helping them with their reading and writing because speaking, listening, reading, and writing are all connected.

Talking with your child lets them hear and try out new words and ideas that they can use in their own talking, reading, and writing. It takes lots of practice to learn to speak and listen well.

Talking with your child also helps you to understand them better. Try telling your child what you're thinking and feeling and encourage them to tell you what they think and feel. This helps them to learn to express themselves.

What language should we use?

When talking with your child, use the language(s) your family speaks at home.

When should we talk together?

You can talk together at any time, for example:

- at mealtimes
- at the supermarket or shops
- in the car
- at bedtime.

Use every opportunity!

When your child wants to talk to you, try to make time to listen to them. If you're busy or if other children are trying to talk at the same time, tell your child why you can't talk to them right away and make a time when you can.



Encourage and praise your child.

What should my child write about?

Anything that interests them!

You can help them to:

- write a letter
- make a sign for their bedroom door
- write notes to family members
- make a book about your family
- make a special card
- write about a family event
- make a shopping list
- make alphabet books or a wall frieze.

Let your child choose what he or she writes about. They are learning to shape their own thoughts into words.

Children often talk about things before they write about them. Encourage your child to talk about an idea or to draw a picture first.



Praise your child's efforts.

How can I help my child to write at home?

- Give them pens, pencils, crayons, felt-tip pens, chalk, or time using a computer.
- Let them see you writing.
- Label objects around the house.
- Pin up a list of words that your child is using.
- Talk with your child about their writing.

If you want to know more about helping your child to write or about your child's progress, ask their teacher. He or she will be glad to help.



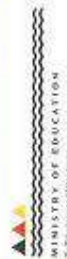
Published 2000 for the Ministry of Education by Learning Media Limited, Box 3293, Wellington, New Zealand.
Website: www.learningmedia.co.nz

Photographs by Adrian Heke

Copyright © Crown 2000

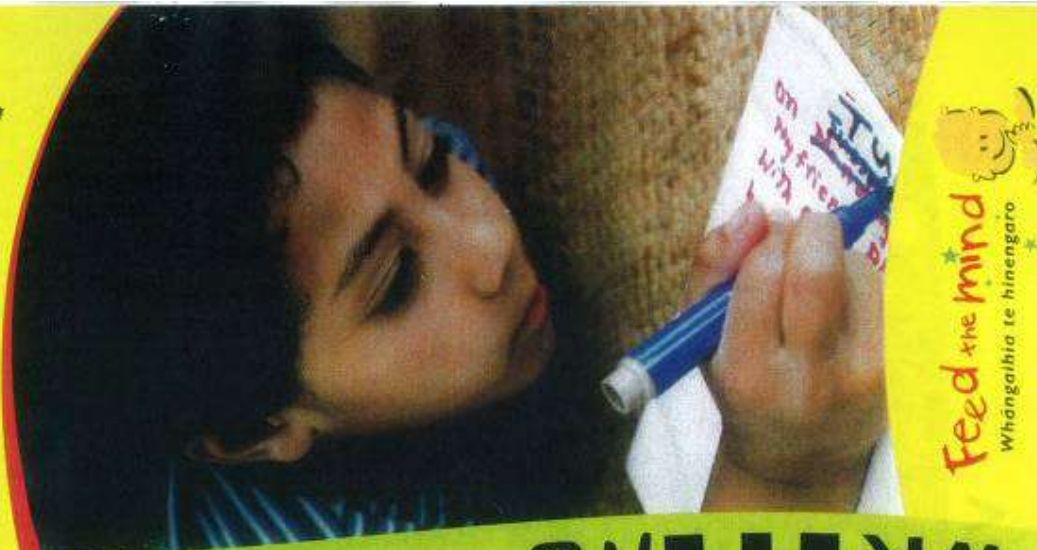
All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

Item number 99189



WRITING

How can we help our children learn to write?



You can help your child to write.

Get involved in your child's learning. Make it fun!

A little time spent showing an interest in your child's writing will help them to write successfully.



How should I respond to the writing my child brings home?

- Encourage your child to tell you about their writing.
- Listen while your child reads their writing to you.
- Talk about the message in their writing.
- Display their work. Be proud of it.
- Share it with others.

How can I encourage my child to write at home?

Praise your child for:

- trying hard and wanting to write
- getting their message across
- knowing where to find words
- rereading their work and making their own improvements
- correctly spelling words that they know and use often.

If your child has trouble spelling a word, wait and let them think and talk about it first. Then encourage your child to write down the sounds they can hear in the word. Help them if they're finding it hard. If they still don't know how to spell the word, tell them.

Value your young writer's effort.

What do I do when my child isn't sure of a word?

Wait a few seconds. Give that young mind time to think. Often your child will work it out by themselves.

If they still don't know the word, try the following steps.

- Look together at the beginning of the word and help your child to work out the first sound.
- Talk about possible words that would make sense in the sentence.
- Suggest that your child look for clues in the pictures.
- Ask your child to go back to the beginning of the sentence or to read on to the end of the sentence.

If they still don't know the word, tell them. Then encourage your child to read the sentence again. Praise your child.

What do I do when my child doesn't understand the meaning of what they are reading?

Relate what happens in the story to your child's experiences.

Use the pictures to help you talk about the story.

What if the book seems too hard?

Your child will be familiar with most of the books they bring home, but if one is too hard, read it to your child instead. It's probably too hard if your child has difficulty with five words in fifty.

If your child often brings home books that are too hard, talk to their teacher.

Should we read other things as well as the reading books from school?

Yes. Together, read words wherever you find them. Read and talk about shop signs, labels, shopping lists, instructions, tickets, and name tags. Read favourite books – again, and again, and again! You could go to a library or bookshop to choose a book. Let your child see you reading.

If you want to know more about helping your child to read or about your child's progress, ask their teacher. He or she will be glad to help.



Published 2000 for the Ministry of Education by Learning Media Limited, Box 1093, Wellington, New Zealand.
Website: www.learningmedia.co.nz

Photographs by Adrian Hahn, except the one above, which is by Spid – Visual Energy.

Copyright © Crown 2000

All rights reserved. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.
First issued 1991/98

READING

How can we help our children to read the books they bring home from school?

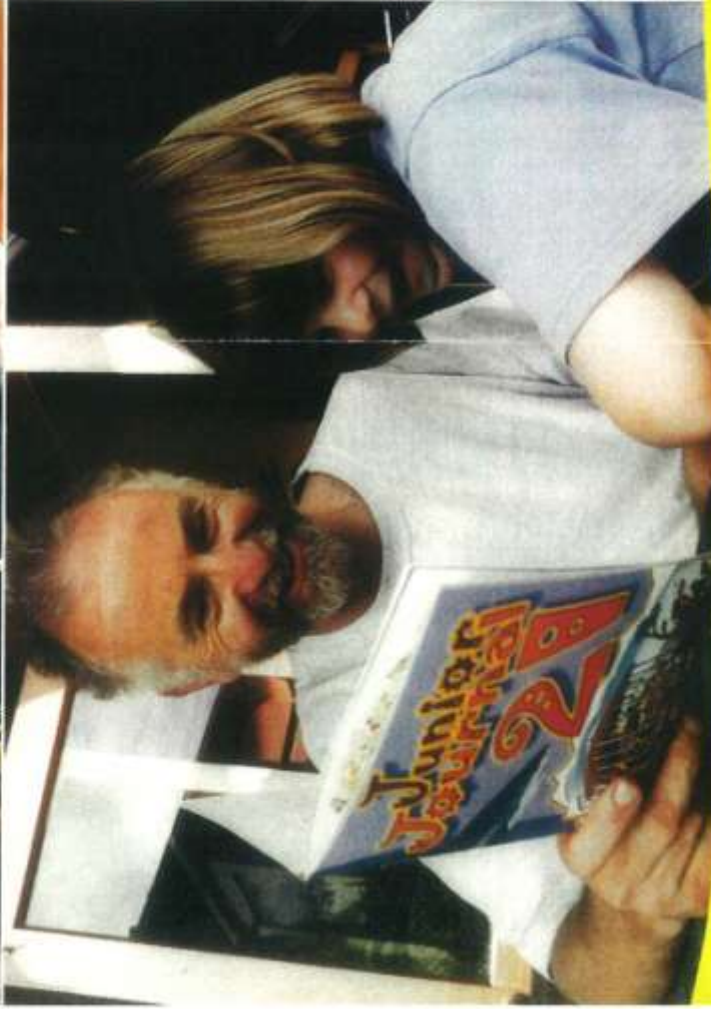


**You can help your
child to read.**

**Get involved in your
child's learning.
Make it fun!**

Find a time to read together.

A little time spent sharing the books that your child brings home from school will make a difference to their reading.



Find a place to read together.

You can read together anywhere:

- at the kitchen table
- in bed
- on the floor.

Make sure it's a place where you both feel comfortable.

Look at the book together.

Talk about the book together.
Then listen to your child read.
Talk about it again afterwards.

Encourage and praise your young reader. Value their effort.