

Reach Out and Read Milestones

Suggestions for how to read with your child as they grow

Reading can be a fun activity for parents and children to do together to connect, learn, and grow. This handout suggests ways for parents to read with their children to help them develop. You know your child best. Talk and read with your baby in the way that works best for you and your family. What matters most is that you hold your child close and read together to create those everyday moments that matter.

	Newborn and 3-5 Day Visits	1-Month and 2-Month Visits	4-Month Visit	6-Month Visit	9-Month Visit	12-Month Visit and Beyond
Books your baby will like	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any book that you love! Books about bringing the baby home, how much you love your baby.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Books with lullabies, rhyming books, and baby faces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board and cloth books, touch and feel booksBright colors and black and white booksInteractive, sing-songy booksBooks with baby faces and animals, Peek-a-boo books		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board booksRhyming booksBaby's first word booksPicture books	
	Your baby loves you and just wants to hear your voice. Choose a book that you will enjoy reading out loud.		Books are listed at the age they can be introduced to a child, but you can continue to use these books beyond that age. If your child still enjoys the book, it is still a good book to read!			
Your baby and the book	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It's okay if it seems like your baby isn't listening while you read the book. They are learning and connecting every time you speak.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Babies like exploring the world in different ways. Your baby might grab, drop, throw, or even chew on the book. That doesn't mean they aren't interested! Play peek-a-boo with the book. See if reading calms the baby.			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Let your child help turn the page.Name things on the page and ask your child to point at them.
	Your baby can express themselves without words. Have conversations with your baby — talk to them in a higher pitched, sing-songy voice (called “parentese”) about every day topics like what you are doing and how you are feeling.					
Connecting with your baby	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Your baby loves the sound of your voice. Talk and sing with your baby whenever you can. They are learning so much from you.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Making funny faces and animal noises might make your baby laugh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage your baby with the book.Point to things, play peek-a-boo, ask questions and see how they respond.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Follow your child's interest when reading — what interests them on the page, what pictures do they want to focus on?
	Routines bring a sense of security. Share books together at nap time and bedtime. Engage your child with different voices, facial expressions and animal sounds.					

*Remember that babies grow and develop at different rates. These suggestions are just guidelines. However, if you have concerns about your baby's development please speak to your clinician about what you are seeing.

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	15-Month and 18-Month Visits	24-Month and 30-Month Visits	3-Year Visit	4-Year Visit	5-Year Visit
Books your baby will like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board books • Books with simple rhymes, predictable text • Books on teeth brushing, daily routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board or paperback • Search and find books • Counting and alphabet books • Potty-training books • Books about the child's current interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paperbacks • Books on sharing, younger brothers and sisters, feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paperbacks • Books about going to school • Books that promote parent-child-sibling relationships, friendships, and how you relate to others 	
Books are listed at the age they can be introduced to a child, but you can continue to use these books beyond that age. If your child still enjoys the book, it is still a good book to read!					
Your baby and the book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your baby does not have to be sitting down to enjoy a book with you — they are listening, even if they are moving around! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to colors and count different objects on the page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask what and where questions, like: "where's the dog on the page?" or "what is that?" • Point out letters and numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask why ("why did he do that?"), how ("How did the boy lose the ball?"), and would ("Would you do that?") questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask "what happens next" in familiar stories • Point out the letters in your child's name. • Relate the story to your child's life and experiences.
Read books together about nature, then go on an adventure. Read a story about cars, trains, or buses before going on a ride. Read a story about cooking, then make something together in the kitchen.					
Connecting with your baby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to your child when they talk to you. • Ask questions and see how they respond. • Follow your child's interest when reading — what interests them on the page, what pictures do they want to focus on? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise your child when they answer your questions about the book. • Count things or identify different things on the page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the child to have their own opinions on what they are reading: "What do you think about that? What would you do?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the child lead the reading. Have them tell the story on the pages. 	
Routines bring a sense of security. Share books together at nap time and bedtime. Engage your child with different voices, facial expressions and animal sounds.					

Additional Tips

Reading together should be a fun activity, not a chore. Follow your child's lead; they might not always be ready to read with you, and that's ok! A few minutes every day is enough.

Use community resources whenever available. Take your child to story time, the library and nearby museums.

Books can help children to see themselves and learn about others. Whenever possible, choose books with pictures and stories about families that don't look like yours as well as families that do.

