

Reading Aloud with Children who have Vision Loss

Reading aloud with loved ones is part of a happy childhood and helps your child develop and learn. A child with vision loss may have difficulty seeing pictures on a page or reading words. But your child will enjoy cuddling with you and hearing an interesting story. And feeling textures on a page can prepare your child for learning Braille. Work together with your child's therapists and teachers to learn how reading can help with motor skills, development of speech and language, and play. Reading aloud makes it fun and gives your child a gift that will last a lifetime – the love of books.



READING TIPS FOR YOUR

Infant or Toddler

- **Read where there is plenty of light** to help your child see the page.
- **Clap your hands and help your child clap along** to the rhythm of the words.
- **Choose books that help your child learn parts of their body.**
- **Talk about the pictures while you read the text.**
- **Find books that have textures, pop-ups, or raised soft shapes.** Name the shapes.
- **Try books with buttons** that make a sound when pushed.
- **For a child with little or no sight, help the child become familiar with Braille.** Use early Braille books or twin vision books with pictures, print, and Braille.

READING TIPS FOR YOUR

Preschool or School-Age Child

- **Read together when it can be fun and relaxing, such as bedtime or after a trip to the park.**
- **Read where there is plenty of light** to help your child see the page.
- **Large print books can make reading easier.**
- **Find books on topics that interest him, such as animals or sports.**
- **Try audio books that your child can start or stop.**
- **While reading to your child, use real objects from the book that the child can feel and explore.**

INFANT OR TODDLER SUGGESTED BOOKS

Books that have soft or textured shapes or pop-out pieces to feel and name.

Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunhardt
(and other Touch and Feel books)

Where Is Baby's Belly Button?
by Karen Katz

DK Braille: Animals (and other titles)

How Do Dinosaurs Eat Cookies?
by Jane Yolen

Black & White
by Tana Hoban

PRESCHOOL OR SCHOOL-AGE SUGGESTED BOOKS

Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?
by Dr. Seuss (use with plastic or stuffed animals)

Books with wheels or parts that move

The Black Book of Colors
by Menena Cottin and Rosana Faria

If You're Happy and You Know It
by Annie Kubler



RESOURCES

BOOKS FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Knots on a Counting Rope (Ages 4-8)
by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault (1997)

Blindsided (YA)
by Priscilla Cummings (2011)

My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay (Ages 4-8)
by Cari Best (2015)

The Heart of Applebutter Hill (YA)
by Donna W. Hill (2013)

Adventures of Abby Diamond (Ages 10-12)
by Kristie Smith-Armand (2009)

Max the Champion (Ages 4-8)
by Sean Stockdale (2014)

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

Children with Visual Impairments: A Guide for Parents
edited by Cay Holbrook (2006)

Experiencing Literacy: A Parents' Guide for Fostering Literacy Development of Children with Visual Impairments
by Cay Holbrook and Alan Koenig (2005)

Reach Out and Teach: Helping Your Child Who is Visually Impaired Learn and Grow
by Kay Alicyn Ferrell (2011)

ORGANIZATIONS Additional web resources are available at reachoutandread.org/ddresources

American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults
actionfund.org

American Foundation for the Blind
afb.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.gov/actearly

American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
aapos.org

National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments
napvi.org

National Eye Institute/National Institutes of Health
nei.nih.gov

American Academy of Ophthalmology
aao.org/eye-health/diseases/low-vision

Perkins eLearning
perkinselearning.org

American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults - Free Braille Books Program
actionfund.org/free-braille-books

DID YOU KNOW? Smart Ways to Use Media and Technology

- Young children learn more from reading or playing games with family than from using phones, computers, tablets, or watching TV. Talk with your child's medical provider about the best way for your child with vision loss to connect with electronic media.
- For children under two, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises using electronic media only for video phone calls with people who are very familiar to them.
- For older children, the AAP suggests no more than one hour a day of high-quality programs (such as Public Television).
- TV and other visual media are more meaningful when you watch together and ask your child to describe what's happening.
- If it's too hard to limit electronic devices, it may be a good idea to remove them completely.
- Putting away your own phone or tablet when you talk or read with your child can help the moment be more enjoyable for both of you.
- You can find more information like this at healthychildren.org/english/family-life/media/pages/default.aspx

Reading tips on the opposite side

