

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD TO READ**

### **Getting beginning readers off to a good start**

As a parent you have a rich opportunity to encourage your child to take the steps toward becoming a life long reader. By reading to your child and encouraging him or her as they begin to read, you will provide the support which matches our classroom program. There are many things that parents can do to help their children grow as readers.

Here are some tips to build your child's reading confidence as you read together:

- Follow the words with your finger from left to right as you read them.
- Read books your child chooses, even if you have read them many times before!
- Point out key words in the story and explain words that children may not know.
- Ask a lot of questions like, "What's happening now?" "What do you think will happen next?" "Where did he go?" "What is she doing?"
- Answer your child's questions, even if they interrupt the story.
- Encourage your child to look at the pictures for clues to the story.
- Put aside a book if your child isn't interested, and pick another one.
- Allow time after reading to talk about the book, and invite your child to re-read parts of the story with you.
- Reading is hard! Encourage your child to try, even if it's not right every time.
- Practice letter sounds together. Practice writing and reading letters and words.
- When you get a word your child doesn't know, look together for clues in the pictures that might provide the answer.
- If your child has trouble reading a word, skip over it, read the rest of the sentence, and try to determine what word might make sense.
- Choose books that rhyme, that repeat familiar phrases, or that have a predictable story.
- Applaud your child's efforts! Don't dwell on mistakes, and give plenty of encouragement. Every new word your child learns is a step toward reading and deserves your attention and praise.

Where is the best place to find books for children of all ages, absolutely free? Your public library! Libraries are places for children and parents to explore together. The library has many books, resources, and activities just for children. Yet, parents and caregivers may take one look at the thousands of children's books and say, "Where do I begin?" Your librarian can help you make good book choices for your young child, so don't be afraid to ask.

Here are some ideas to help make the library a favorite place for parents and their children to explore:

- Make library visits a regular activity that your child can look forward to.
- Get a library card for yourself and your child (even a three- or four-year-old). Children love the feeling of having their own card.
- Attend library story times (including evening story hours for working parents).
- Guide your child in choosing books, but remember that children should be allowed to choose books, too.
- Use the card catalog or computer with your child to look up book titles, authors, and favorite topics. .
- Set a good example by taking good care of books and returning them on time