

MAKING READING FUN

The way you talk about reading and the way reading fits into your daily routines can make all the difference in how your child thinks about learning to read on his own.

As a parent, you play the most important part in encouraging your child to look forward to being able to read by himself. You can help him look forward to reading as something that's enjoyable, something that's fun. **How? Well, by making books and stories something you enjoy together every day.** By treating time for reading as a pleasure, as something you look forward to yourself, you'll encourage your child to look forward to the time when he'll be able to read on his own.

You can make reading a story together a nice part of your daily reunion, for example, when you and your child come back together at home after work and preschool. Or before you turn on the television, maybe your child could listen to a story book with you or to a story tape. You can get lots of story tapes at your public library. Or you could make your very own. Just tape yourself--or anyone your child loves--as you or they read a story one day. Those tapes will probably become your child's favorites!

Try to make reading aloud to your child a part of your family's routine before going to bed. It's a gentle way to end the day, to get ready for sleep, and it will help your child have good feelings about reading.

If you have to go to the laundromat over the weekend and your child's going with you, take a story book along to read while the clothes tumble and dry. And the same for trips to the dentist or to the doctor's office: if you have a story to read to your child in the waiting room, the time will go by faster and you'll have a better time.

If you had a hard time yourself in school and reading was always rough, here's your chance to make it different for your child. It doesn't have to be so hard for him. As he grows, he'll have only good memories of reading with you.

Learning to read in school may be much easier for him, but even if it isn't, those good feelings will encourage him. They'll help him through the hard parts and over the bumps in the road because **he'll already know that being able to read is a great thing!** And **you'll have made that happen.**

What a fine gift to give your child!