

# GOOD BEGINNINGS NEVER END

N.C. Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center • 1-800-246-6731

October 1999

## Key Points

- The development of language and literacy begins at birth.
- Children who have been read aloud to at an early age become the best readers.
- Reading plays an important role in future school success.
- According to the U.S. Department of Education, the most important predictor of reading achievement is whether a child has been read to regularly.
- Children may not reach their full potential in language development if they are not exposed to reading starting in infancy.

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## Read Me A Book



Olivia Bynum reads a book to Raekwon, Dakwon, Delonica and Joseph.

Reading aloud is one of the most important activities that you can do with the children in your care. It teaches children essential skills and provides the opportunity for sharing quality time with them. Experts say that you should continue to read aloud with children even after they can read to themselves.

Very young children need books much like they need food. The latest brain development research demonstrates that books help the brains of even the youngest babies to grow. Sharing books with young children stimulates their ability to understand and appreciate language, and this ease with language is the first step in becoming a reader.

Here are some suggestions for making reading together more fun and educational:

- Find a comfortable, quiet place free from distractions. Sit close to the children so everyone can see the illustrations.

- Tell the children the name of the book, its author, and illustrator. Take time to look at and talk about the cover.
- As you read, occasionally move your finger from left to right, following the words in order to give the children a sense of how words are placed on the page.
- If a child asks questions or makes comments while you read, respond with brief, positive remarks and then continue to read.
- Use your voice as a way to hold the children's attention. For example, change your voice to suit a character. Doing this may feel silly at first, but children love it.
- Keep a good pace without rushing the story. If you're reading a picture book, give the children time to enjoy and explore the illustrations.
- If appropriate, encourage physical dramatization of what is being read. For example, if a character is flying, you and the children can flap your arms.
- Read at different times of the day and for different reasons and in a variety of places. Reading need not be limited to "quiet time" only.
- Share stories, poems, jingles, lullabies, rhymes, and finger plays.
- Children enjoy hearing stories repeated. Be prepared to re-read favorites. Once a child is familiar with a story, encourage her to "read" it to you. Don't correct a child when she misses or makes up a word, or adds to the story; just enjoy her creativity and imagination.

Make reading part of every day!



At Your Service

# 1-800-CHOOSE-1

## North Carolina Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center

Providing Training, Consultation & Resources for North Carolina's Child Care Community



### Training Opportunities

#### November 4

2nd Quarter  
Commission Meeting,  
Raleigh  
Malinda Rathbone  
919-662-4535

#### November 10 & 17

1-2-3 Magic  
Workshop,  
Hendersonville  
Robin Estes  
828-696-1239

#### November 4

Child Safety,  
Kenansville  
LaVerne Stephens  
910-296-2000

#### November 11

NAFCC: Learn More  
About Accreditation,  
Morganton  
828-439-2328

#### November 6

Burke Co. Fall  
Mini Conference  
828-439-2328

#### November 18-20

NC School-Age  
Care Coalition  
Conference, Raleigh

#### November 9

Overview to  
Inclusion,  
Hendersonville  
828-692-3847

#### November 18

Physical & Intellectual  
Development:  
Ages 3 – 12 yrs.,  
Whiteville  
910-642-8189

#### November 9

Playground Safety  
Training, Burlington  
336-226-4292

#### November 18

Science & Action,  
Kenansville  
Ms. Chapman  
910-296-2000



# The ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care...

## Activities to Expand Books



Books can be used for many activities during the day. Stretch the stories you read to include art, cooking and snack time, music and movement, dramatic play, science and nature activities. Here's how:

- Provide props to act out the story
- Retell the story using a flannel board and felt characters
- Prepare a snack to go with the story
- Play music and sing songs to go along with the theme of the book
- Draw or paint a picture of a favorite character



### *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

This is a favorite book that your children will ask you to read again and again. It is the story of the metamorphosis of a caterpillar when he was a small egg on a tiny leaf until he becomes a beautiful butterfly. Eric Carle uses counting and the days of the week so the children can easily recall the phrases. Encourage the children to say the recurring phrase with you, "But he was still hungry."

Here are some activities to go along with the book:

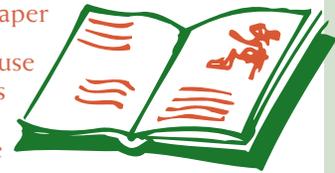
- Create tissue paper designs like the end pages of the book
- Plan a "Caterpillar Snack Week." Prepare and eat the apples, pears, plums, and strawberries for snack following the days of the week in the book
- Construct felt pieces from the pictures in the book
- Provide the flannel board and felt pieces for the children to retell the story in sequence



## Book Making

When children make their own books they begin to understand the connection between talking, writing, and reading. Child-made books can have any number of pages and words and be illustrated with a child's own artwork. Invite children to "read" the books they have made. Here are some ideas for different kinds of books:

- **Tiny Book** – made with very small paper
- **Giant Book** – made with very large paper
- **Accordion Book** – fanfold paper to create a book that opens into one long piece of paper
- **Fabric Book** – use different fabrics for different textures – write with fabric crayons
- **Shape Book** – cut the cover and pages the same size and shape – e.g. fish book, turtle book, star book



## Motheread, Inc.

Motheread, Inc., is a private, non-profit organization that works with parents and other caregivers to teach the "why" of reading as well as the "how." As part of Smart Start funding, they help adults make the most of reading with children. There are certified instructors in 80 counties in North Carolina. If you would like further information about Motheread, call 919-781-2088 or email at [motheread@earthlink.net](mailto:motheread@earthlink.net).



## Test Your Knowledge

Delores reads to the children in her care everyday. She is focusing on reading this month and is preparing a newsletter for parents about the importance of reading to their children. Which of the following statements is false and should **not** be included in her newsletter?

Call us at 1-800-CHOOSE-1 with your answer and receive a free gift if you are among the first 100 callers.

1. Books can be enjoyed in a variety of places.
2. It is common for children to ask for books to be read again and again.
3. Infants are too young to enjoy books.
4. Changing your voice for different characters when you read helps hold a child's attention.
5. You should read with a good pace, stopping briefly to answer a child's questions, and then continue.



## References for October Articles

Motheread, Inc.

*Playing Print* by Carol Ann Bloom, 1997.

*Educating Young Children* by Mary Hohmann and David P. Weikart, 1995.

*Story Stretchers* by Shirley C. Raines and Robert J. Cannady.

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

or if you would like to send suggestions or comments

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## OR CALL:

1-800-246-6731  
[www.healthychildcarenc.org](http://www.healthychildcarenc.org)

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