

# TIPS TO



# READ AND DISCUSS STORIES

## With Your Infant (0-12 months)

**Read regularly.** Your baby won't understand for a while, but that's fine. They will hear your voice, see the pictures, and develop good feelings about books.

**Baby books.** Board books with hard covers and thick pages are made especially for babies. Choose books that are short and have simple, bright pictures.

**Snuggle up.** Hold your baby in your lap so they feel cozy and can see the pictures.

**Involve them.** They might want to hold the book, turn the pages, or pat the pictures. They might even chew on the book. It's all learning!

**Describe the pictures.** It's not important to read all—or any—of the words. Point to and talk about the pictures. Name the things your child shows interest in.

**Follow their lead.** When they start to lose interest, try another book, or stop. Short periods of reading will work best.

## With Your Toddler (12-36 months)

**Warm up.** Before opening the book, check out the cover. Read the title. Look at the picture. What does your child think the story about?

**Change your voice.** Try different voices for different characters.

**Name that.** Name and talk about the things your child points to. See if they can point to objects you name. "Can you find the elephant?"

**Ask questions.** "What is in the box?" or "Why is the girl happy?" Respond to your child's comments and questions. Show your interest in their ideas.

**Don't be too serious.** Your child may want to turn the page before you finish reading it. If they can't sit still for the whole book, that's ok.

**Re-read.** Toddlers learn through repetition, so it is normal when they want to read a favorite book over and over. Notice how proud they feel when they master the story. But try for variety too, because new books offer new things to see and learn.

## With Your Preschooler (36-60 months)

**Ask questions that don't have "yes" or "no" answers.** "What do you think will happen next?" "Why is he sad?" After asking, give your child time to think and respond.

**Pause for new words.** Pause to talk about words your child doesn't know. "That's a 'beetle.' It's a type of bug."

**Talk about feelings.** When you read a story together, point to a person in the book and ask, "How is he feeling?" When your child responds, ask if they have a guess about why. They can look for clues in the pictures.

**Look for letters.** Out in public? Find items with labels, like a TRASH CAN, and encourage your child to identify the letters they know and sound out the word.

**Switch roles.** Pick a book that you and your child have read several times. This time, have them "read" the story to you. They can describe what is happening in the pictures.

## Make it Routine

Try to read together every day. Before bed is a great time to read, but choose a time of day that works for your family.