Understanding How Children Learn to Read

**Utilize activities that support the Five Principles of Reading:**

* Phonemic Awareness
  + List words that mostly start with one letter, but mix in a few that do not and then ask the children which word does not belong.
* Phonics
  + Sing the ABC’s with your child/children; go through each letter making its sound and talk about words that start with that sound
* Reading Fluency
  + Read a predictable book with your child/children and focus on your rhythm and fluency - nursery rhymes are great for this
* Vocabulary
  + Label common objects around your home that your child/children use often
* Reading Comprehension
  + Read a story with your child/children and ask them questions about what happened during the story after you have read it

**Encourage activities that support skills areas that help develop reading skills:**

* Motor Skills
  + Dance together (large motor) or draw together (fine motor)
* Social Skills
  + Have a play date
* Self-help Skills
  + Allow children to dress themselves
* Problem Solving Skills
  + Engage in a puzzle with your child
* Math Skills
  + Count together
* Language Skills
  + Talk about things while doing chores or running errands
* Listening Skills
  + Give simple directions for your child to follow

Reading with Your Child

**Explore ideas that help to develop critical thinking skills in your child/children:**

* Select a book to read with your child/children
  + Read the title
    - Ask what they think the story is about
  + Look at the pictures
    - Ask them what is happening in the pictures
  + Read the story and ask questions throughout, including whether what they guessed while looking at the pictures was correct
  + At the end of the story ask them if they liked how the book ended

**Tips for Reading to Children**

* Have a regular reading time and place
* Take turns choosing books
* Introduce books in an interesting way
* Change the words sometimes (instead of dog, be specific, Great Dane)
* Instead of reading the story, make it up using the pictures, and then read what the author wrote
* Read with expression and use voices
* Vary reading the whole story without interruption with pausing to ask questions
* Talk about what you have read
* Use books to model behavior you hope to see in your child
* Connect stories to other activities like drawing or acting
* Tell your own story

Reading is Everywhere: Learning through Play and Daily Life

**Engage in activities and play that help your child/children learn:**

* Motor Development
  + Dance
  + Play Simon Says
  + Play with play dough
* Creativity in Writing and Drawing
  + Color
  + Paint
  + Cut shapes
* Number Recognition and Sorting
  + Count and sort objects (cereal with different shapes/ colored goldfish crackers)
  + Use number flash cards
  + Record height/weight

*Information provided taken from EPIC’s Ready, Set, Read! (RSR!) Program. For more information on RSR! or other EPIC programming, please visit EPICforchildren.org,*

*call 332-4100, or like/follow us on social media.*

Reading is Everywhere: Learning through Play and Daily Life

Engage in activities and play that help your child/children learn:

* Pretend Play
  + Play dress up
  + Make up songs
  + Act out stories
* Letter and Word Recognition
  + Write letters in salt trays
  + Play “I Spy” and name common objects in your home
* Listening
  + Play with musical instruments made from household items
  + Listen to music together
* Outdoor Play
  + Visit a park together
  + Go on a nature walk and collect items like leaves, sticks, and stones

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Reasons to Read with your Child

1. Children will become better readers
2. Reading exercises the brain
3. Reading improves concentration
4. Reading teaches children about the world around them
5. Reading develops imagination
6. Reading regularly leads to academic success
7. Reading builds confidence
8. Reading helps children develop empathy
9. Reading is a great way to spend time together
10. Reading is FUN!

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