**Why Should I Read To My Child?**

Children who have been read to have an easier time learning to read when they start school. When you read to them, you teach them:

- New words, such as the names of people, animals, and things
- Words they will use when they learn to talk
- About the world they live in
- To watch and listen
- That reading and sharing stories is a fun way to be with others

Reading and sharing stories can also be a way to calm children.

**General Tips:**

- Use funny, different voices when you read and share stories. It will keep your baby interested. You can also sing the words!
- Point to pictures.
- Have fun reading with your baby.

**Reading books with babies helps them learn new words and information about their world. Cuddle with your baby and enjoy your time together.**

**COMMENT** or talk about the story and pictures.

- Talk about the front cover of the book. Tell your baby what the story is about. “This book is about animals.”
- Talk about what your baby is looking at in the book. Point to what he/she is looking at. “That is a ball.” Or, “Tyler, look. A ball.” You will be teaching your baby a new word!
- Connect what is in the book to your baby’s life. Use real objects when possible. “You have a ball. Here it is!” Show your baby his/her ball.

**ASK** questions about what your baby is looking at in the book.

- Point to a picture in a book. Ask your baby what is going on. “What is that?”
- Wait and see if your baby does or says something. He/she might wave a foot, roll over, or say “baaaa.”

**RESPOND** by adding a little more. “That is a b-b-ball.”
The Iowa Department of Education, along with federal partners, offers many services for children birth to 3 years old and their families. Some of these include:

**Early ACCESS** is Iowa’s system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with or at risk for developmental delays. For help in getting connected call toll-free at 1-888-IAKIDS1 or e-mail earlyaccessia@vnsdm.org.

**Early Head Start** is a locally operated, federally funded program that provides a comprehensive child development program serving pregnant women and children birth to three with guidance, information, and direct services to foster healthy development of children and their families.

**Even Start** is a federally funded program that supports improving the educational opportunities of the nation’s low-income families by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program.

For more information, contact the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Early Childhood Services, 515/281-3924.

### References

1. **Read With Me: Birth to 3 Years.** [http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm](http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm)
2. **Everyday Ways to Support Your Baby’s and Toddler’s Early Learning.** [www.zerotothree.org/schoolreadiness](http://www.zerotothree.org/schoolreadiness)
3. **Center for Early Literacy Learning.** [http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/pgparents.php#toddlers](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/pgparents.php#toddlers)
4. **Talaris “Spotlights”**.
   a. **Mommy, I Know A Word!**
   b. **Take A Break With Books!**
   c. **Snuggle Up For Reading!** [http://www.talaris.org/synopsis.htm](http://www.talaris.org/synopsis.htm)

Every Child Reads – Infants and Toddlers
A Collaborative Initiative:

Iowa Department of Education
Iowa Department of Public Health
State Library of Iowa
Iowa Public Television
Reach Out and Read Iowa

Parent: 5/10