

Sharing Books with Your Baby



*Can you really share books with children who don't talk yet?
Yes! These tips have worked for other parents and care providers.*

How do I get started?

Sing, talk, or recite rhymes to your baby every day. Around 6 months of age, many babies begin to notice pictures. Point to a picture in a book and name the item or read the simple words. Babies often like to have the same book or the same page read to them over and over.

What books will my baby like?

Babies like books with pictures of people, animals, or familiar objects, and with simple words and rhymes. Good baby books are made of cloth, thick cardboard, or vinyl. They are easy to clean and tough to destroy!

When can I read with my baby?

Make reading part of the daily routine: after a nap and before bed are two popular times. Tuck a book into the diaper bag when “out and about” with a baby, so sharing books can be part of waiting in the doctor’s office, for the bus, or in the grocery store checkout line.

Where can I read to my baby?

Find a place where you are both comfortable and your baby can see the pages. Your baby will probably prefer your lap. In a car, the car seat is the place for a little one who is listening to a book.

How long can I read to my baby?

A few seconds, a few minutes—only as long as your baby remains interested. Sing the words, change your voice, or use a puppet to help hold her attention. If reading time is short but pleasant, she may listen more another time.

Am I the only one who can read to my baby?

Mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts or uncles—even older brothers and sisters—can also help babies learn to love reading by reading to them.

What if my baby isn't interested in books?

Keep trying, but don't force it. Some babies are just busy learning other things. Let your little one see *you* reading. Talk, sing, say rhymes, or tell stories to him. Offer books at quiet times, or when he is looking for something to do. Such invitations help many children develop an interest in books.

For related Web resources, see “Sharing Books with Your Baby” at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.



29 Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Dr. • Champaign, IL 61820-7469
Telephone: 217-333-1386 • Fax: 217-244-7732
Toll-free: 877-275-3227 (Voice/TTY)
Email: iel@uiuc.edu
Internet: <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

Illinois State Board of Education

For more tip sheets on other topics, please go to <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>