

## What if my child is having difficulty learning to read?

If your child is having difficulty learning to read, you can help in several ways. By taking time and providing support, parents can make a big difference.

- Make sure your child has books appropriate for his or her reading level. If there are more than five words per page that your child cannot read, it is probably too difficult.
- Choose shorter texts if your child is struggling.
- Choose books with rhyme or repetition for learning new words, or a series of books, because they use similar vocabulary and characters.
- Teach your child to use the following strategies when stuck on a word:
  - Does it make sense?
  - Sound it out.
  - Look at the picture.
  - Make a guess.
  - Skip it and read to the end of the sentence and then try the sentence again.
  - Find smaller words within a word that is difficult.
  - Chunk the word in two- or three-letter chunks.

## How can the school help?

Speak to your teacher or principal if you are concerned with your child's reading skills or would like additional resources. You can work with school staff and support your child together.

- Ask about supports such as the Early Literacy program, Pen Pals project or any other resources available.
- Discuss the possibility of testing by school staff to provide more information if your child is struggling.

## Recipe for Literacy

- 1 relaxed child:** bathed, fed and at peace with the world
  - 1 book** of colourful pictures and/or a good story
  - 1 accommodating parental lap,** complete with owner who enjoys the book and reflects that through the face, voice and whole self.
- Combine the above ingredients and enjoy.

Source: *Ladders to Learning Kits for Kids*  
[www.ladderstolearning.com](http://www.ladderstolearning.com)



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# Building Literacy Skills at Home

A guide for parents and guardians



**R**eading is key to success at every grade level and in every subject. When children become readers, their world is forever wider and richer. This brochure offers some tips on helping your child read.

## What can parents do?

Parents who take an active role in the learning process have a positive influence on their children's reading and writing abilities. Here are a few ways to improve your young child's literacy skills:

- Start reading with your young children and keep reading together even after your children can read on their own.
- Read daily and frequently; pick a regular time to read with your child.
- Read aloud to stimulate your child's imagination, language and listening skills.
- Read a variety of materials to your child such as picture books, chapter books, newspapers, magazines, comics, labels, poems, billboards, menus, recipes, greeting cards.
- Choose books that you enjoyed reading as a child.
- Be a role model by letting your child see you read. Discuss what you've read.

## How can I make reading fun?

Time spent together reading is fun. Here are a few ways to keep the fun in reading:

- Encourage your child to make predictions about what will happen next.
- Talk about the book and ask questions:
  - What do you think the book is about?
  - What is your favourite part? Why?
  - Who is your favourite character or person in the book?
- Link the story you are reading to your child's world: "Do you remember when we went to the farm/store/etc.?"
- Re-read a favourite book many times.
- Read books based on movies. It's fun to watch the movie after reading the book.
- Use different voices for the characters in the book.
- If your child is able to do so, take turns reading, sounding out and repeating difficult words
- Read as a family. Let each child and adult pick the story or novel in turn. Read a chapter after dinner each night instead of watching television.



## How can I make my home "reading friendly"?

- Place a reading light in your child's room.
- Build a library corner for your child.
- Subscribe to magazines that would interest your child.
- Introduce your child to a book series.
- Get a library card and plan regular visits.
- Turn off the television and have family reading time.
- Buy books as gifts for birthdays and other special occasions.
- Participate in your school's book lending, book fair and book buying programs.
- Encourage your child to participate in reading clubs at school.
- Attend special events where authors of your child's favourite books are reading or signing books.
- Model good habits by reading for your own enjoyment.

