



Sharing books with your baby

Sharing books is a great way to start to help your child learn to talk and it's a good time to share cuddles as well!

Find a **quiet place**. Turn off the TV and radio so there are **no distractions**.

You **don't always have to read the words** and don't worry about looking at all the pages in the right order – **let your child take the lead**.

Choose books that your child can **explore** – bath books or cloth/feely/flap books.

Make your own 'books' of familiar people or things using photos or pictures cut out of magazines/catalogues – not all books need words.

Talk about the pictures - if it's a picture of a dog, talk about a dog you know.

Give your child **time to respond** to your chatter and **keep your talking simple** – use single words or short phrases to describe the pictures.

Don't put any pressure on your child to name pictures but if s/he copies your words, praise her/him and say the words again for her/him.

Don't read for too long. Young children get bored quickly so **'little and often'** is best. Let other people - grandparents, brothers and sisters – join in too.

Use **props and puppets** – something to look at/feel keeps children interested.

It's good to share **favourite books again and again**. Repetition helps children to understand and remember the language they hear.

Remember – you are not teaching your child to read. Children learn to talk a long time before they learn to read, and sharing books is a great way to help your child's language development.

