

Reading: A good investment

One of the best investments parents can make towards their children's education is to inspire a love of reading in the home.

Schools develop the intellectual process of teaching your child to read. Parents who reinforce this learning with the LOVE to read give their children much more than literary skills. Simply by encouraging your child to read and demonstrating your own enthusiasm for reading, you can establish habits and attitudes that last a lifetime.

Reading skills are the foundation for good grades and success in education. When children discover the joy of reading, they begin to question and explore life beyond their immediate experiences. Once older children begin to read a wide variety of books, magazines and newspapers, they develop their intellectual curiosity and understanding of the world.

Two of the most important ways parents can help their children become better readers are by reading to them and by encouraging them to read independently. Research indicates reading to children is the best way for parents to help children become literate. To encourage independent reading parents can:

- **continue to read to their children** long after they are able to read to themselves;
- **set aside time to read to your children every day** (turn off the TV) and read after supper or allow your child to read for half an hour after bedtime);
- **be a role model** (if you read, chances are your children will too);
- **show your enthusiasm for reading** by reading to yourself as well as to your children;
- **capitalize on your children's interests** (e.g. dinosaurs, trains, mysteries);
- **show that reading is a pleasure;** never force reading, or make reading a punishment.

Reading to your children gives both of you a quiet time together, filled with warmth, safety and love. These feelings also become strongly associated with stories and books. The benefits will be everlasting.



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