

# Parent Reading Tips: Infants

All parents want their children to be able to read, write, and speak well. But it won't happen overnight. Literacy starts at birth and develops over the years. In *everything* you say and do with your baby, you are teaching and your baby is learning. Jump in and start reading with your infant!

## What is literacy?

"Literacy means being able to read and write. But it means much more. Literacy is being able to speak, and to understand what you read, write, and hear. Children who are "literate" know that sounds, letters, pictures, and ideas go together and have meaning.



## Make Literacy a Daily Habit for you and your Baby!



## Ways to Build your Infant's Literacy

The first three years of exploring and playing with books, singing nursery rhymes, listening to stories, recognizing words, and scribbling are truly the building blocks for language and literacy development.



Your baby is using all five senses to learn: touching, smelling, tasting, seeing, and hearing. Engage all of your baby's senses in learning language and reading skills!

- **A Few minutes of Reading at a Time is OK.** And don't worry if you don't finish the story. You may find that your child has a favorite page or picture.
- **Talk or Sing About the Pictures.** You are helping to develop your baby's listening skills.
- **Make Books a Part of Your daily Routine.** The more that books are woven into children's everyday lives, the more likely they will be able to see reading as a pleasure and a gift.  
-Meal times, in the car or bus, at child care drop off, at the doctor's office, at bath time, and at bed time

## What Infants Like in Books

*Infants 0-6 months:*

- Books with simple, large pictures or designs with bright colors
- Stiff cardboard, "chunky" books, or fold-out books that can be propped up
- Cloth or vinyl books that can go in the bath

*Infants 6-12 months:*

- Board books with photos of other babies
- Books with familiar objects
- Small plastic photo albums of family and friends
- Washable cloth books to cuddle and mouth with

**Read to your baby everyday!** Everywhere you are. Point and read signs you see on doors, in the store, or at the park. Point to and name pictures in your baby's books. There are words everywhere around us...let your baby see and hear those words!

United Way  
**S**UCCESS **B**Y **6**

[www.uwayhelps.org](http://www.uwayhelps.org)



United Way  
of Champaign County