



SHARING BOOKS WITH YOUR 2-YEAR-OLD

BOOKS BUILD CONNECTIONS TOOLKIT



Use the following tips, which cover two stages if your child is 2 years old:

- 24–29 months
- 30–35 months

Two-year-olds are busy, active, and into everything. Two-year-olds are pointing and using their words to ask for things. They can understand and follow simple directions. Two-year-olds like to imitate, pretend, and laugh at silly things. Two-year-olds like to “do it myself,” but they are very attached to their parents and caregivers. Reading and talking about books with 2-year-olds strengthens all of these abilities.

Two-year-olds often have very strong preferences and wishes. Never force your child to share a book together when your child makes it clear that she does not wish to do so. Instead, find another activity you can do together, like talking, singing, or pretend play, that she may find more interesting.

For each age range, there are examples of what your child can do and tips you can do to help you share and enjoy books with your 2-year-old.

Sharing Books With Your 24- To 29-Month-Old

- Toddlers enjoy books and learn from sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time strengthens your bond with your toddler.
- It teaches her how important she is to you. It builds her confidence and her interest in learning.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with toddlers teach them to talk and build their vocabulary.

TALK



READ



SING



FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your 2-Year-Old



- Reading books with toddlers helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines started with young children help prevent struggles at bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your toddler how to fall asleep alone by putting her in bed sleepy but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

24- to 29-month-olds can:

- Choose a book to read together.
- Love reading the same book over and over and over again!
- Repeat some of the words and phrases you say or read.
- Love laughing at silly stories, like the horse who could only say *quack, quack*.
- Ask you questions about the pictures or story, such as: *What's that?*

You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with some sturdy books.
- Use reading together as a way to calm and comfort your child.
- Start a conversation by repeating an important word your child has just said. You can say, *Yes, balloons. Lots of balloons. The girl has lots of balloons.* Then wait for your child to say something more.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Use different voices for different characters.
- Respond with excitement to your child's questions and comments.
- Count pictures and wait for your child to repeat the numbers after you.
- Take your child to your local public library to borrow books or to enjoy story time.

Sharing Books With Your 30- To 35-Month-Old

- Toddlers enjoy books and learn from sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time strengthens your bond with your toddler.
- It teaches him how important he is to you. It builds his confidence and his interest in learning.



FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your 2-Year-Old



- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with toddlers teach them to talk and build their vocabulary.
- Reading books with toddlers helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines started with young children help prevent struggles around bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your toddler how to fall asleep alone by putting him in bed sleepy but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

30- to 35-month-olds can:

- Tell you the names of the stories they want to share.
- Remember which book they read last night.
- Tell you about pictures and stories in longer sentences.
- Tell you their version of the story in a favorite book.
- Ask you questions about the characters or story in a book.
- Pretend to be a character in a favorite story.

You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with a few good picture books.
- Use reading together as a way to calm and comfort your child.
- Talk about how things that happen in books are like things your child has done or seen.
- Talk about the feelings of characters books. Ask if your child has ever felt like this.
- Count pictures and wait for your child to repeat the numbers after you.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Use different voices for different characters.
- Ask your child to show you all the things in a picture that are alike in some way. You could say: *Where are all the animals?* or *Can you find all the things that are yellow?*
- Take your child to your local library to enjoy story time or to borrow books.

Adapted from AAP Literacy Promotion Toolkit Web site (2008), Pamela C High, MD, FAAP, Natalie Golova, MD, FAAP, Marita Hopmann, PhD, and the AAP Council on Early Childhood, 2014





Other family resources related to early literacy and early learning include the following:

- Helping Your Child Learn to Read
- Sharing Books With Your Baby up to Age 11 Months
- Sharing Books With Your 1-Year-Old
- Sharing Books With Your Preschooler
- Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child
- The Secret to a Smarter Baby
- Why It Is Never Too Early to Start Reading With Your Baby

Pediatric Professional ePubs in this AAP series include the following:

- Evidence Supporting Early Literacy and Early Learning
- Finding the Right Book for Every Child
- Selecting Books for Your Program
- What Every Pediatric Professional Can Do to Promote Early Literacy and Early Learning

Please visit aap.org/literacy for further information about resources mentioned within this publication and additional resources on early literacy.

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