



# SHARING BOOKS WITH YOUR SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

BOOKS BUILD CONNECTIONS TOOLKIT



TALK



READ



SING



**What's the best way to share books with your school-age child? Use the following tips, if your child is turning 5-years-old or older.**

Children must learn to read to succeed in school. Learning to read is easy for some children and harder for others, but reading aloud with those you love is fun for all children and all parents. Your children are never too old or too young to love reading books with you. Reading together and talking about books with children can give you a special way of connecting with them.

For each age, there are examples of what your child can do and tips you can do to help you read, share, and enjoy books with your school-age children.

## Sharing Books With Your 5-Year-Old

- Five-year-olds are getting ready for kindergarten.
- Kindergarteners love books. They learn from reading 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 relationship with your child.
- It teaches her how important she is to you. It builds her self-esteem, her interest in learning, and her ability to handle small stresses.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with kindergarteners help build their vocabulary. It teaches them about letters and the sounds that they make.
- Reading books with kindergartners helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside 10 to 30 minutes every day for reading together, perhaps as part of your bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines help prevent struggles around bedtime.



## FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child



- At the end of your routine, teaching kindergartners how to fall asleep alone by putting them into bed relaxed, but awake, is important. This helps prevent night waking.
- This may become the best time of your day!

### 5-year-olds can:

- Tell you which books they want to read with you.
- Tell you how a story makes them feel or is like things they have seen or done.
- Ask you questions about books you are reading together.
- Begin to name the first letters in some of the words you are reading and start to learn the sound that letter makes.
- Predict (before turning the page) what might happen next in a story.
- Make a favorite story into a play. Put that play on for you.

### You can:

- Find a quiet, comfy place to cuddle up together with a few good books.
- Ask your child to tell you about the pictures and the story or to guess what may happen next.
- Respond with interest to her questions and comments.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Use different voices for different characters.
- Talk about the emotions in pictures and stories. You can say: *Look at her face! She looks mad. Why do you think she is mad? What makes you mad?*
- Ask her to solve problems in stories. You can say: *Oh, no! That boy won't share his cars. How would you feel if someone did that? What would you do?*
- Count the characters or objects in the pictures with her.
- Point out and name colors, shapes, numbers, and letters in books with her.
- Point out written words in the world around you, like on traffic signs and on food labels in the store. Ask her to find a new word each time you go out together.
- Take your child to your local public library to borrow books or to enjoy story time.

## Sharing Books With Your 6–10-Year-Old

- Young school children who read with their parents regularly learn to love books.
- They treasure their special time reading with you, the most important person in their world.
- There is no reason to stop reading together when children begin to read themselves. In fact, there are many reasons why reading together will continue to be both fun and rewarding.
- Children in elementary school are well on their way to becoming independent readers, yet you can read at a much higher level than they can.



## FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child



- The adventure, excitement, imagination, and humor in many children’s books appeal to children and to their parents.
- Some children must work harder than others to learn to break the “code” connecting letters to sounds, words, and ideas. Reading great stories aloud with these children pushes them to want to put in the extra effort they will need to master the code and learn to read on their own.
- Reading and talking about the books you read with young children build their vocabulary.
- Talking about the books you read will boost their reading comprehension and expand their knowledge of the world.
- This special one-on-one time will continue to strengthen your bond with your child. It can build his self-confidence, increase his motivation to learn, and help him develop the ability to handle small stresses.
- Continue setting aside 10 to 30 minutes every day for reading books aloud together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- This can be the time of day that you both look forward to the most.

### 6–10-year-olds can:

- Choose a book from school, from the library, or with you that they want to read together.
- Begin to sound out some of the words in books or they may be able to read fluently, depending on their age and ability.
- Predict (before turning the page) what might happen next in a story.
- Retell a part of or the entire story you are reading.
- Tell you what they think about the story and imagine how they might have changed some parts of it, if they had written it themselves.
- Talk about how the story reminds them of things they have done or how they have felt.

### You can:

- Find a quiet, comfy place to cuddle up together with a good book because you just love being with your child!
- If your child needs to practice reading skills or loves to read aloud himself, you can take turns reading a page or a chapter with him.
- Stop and ask your child to tell you what he thinks about the story or how he thinks the people in the story are feeling or to guess what may happen next.
- Read with joy and enjoyment! Respond with interest to your child’s questions and thoughts.
- Ask your child to imagine how he might have told this story differently or what message this story may have given him.



## FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child



- Take your child to your local public library and help him choose books to borrow that you both want to read together.
- Remember that reading together starting when children are young is a powerful way to build healthy habits that can last a lifetime. There is a huge return on this investment!

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 2-Year-Old
- Sharing Books With Your Preschooler
- 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](http://aap.org/literacy) for further information about resources mentioned within this publication and additional resources on early literacy.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Original document included as part of Books Build Connections Toolkit. Copyright © 2015 American Academy of Pediatrics. All Rights Reserved. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not review or endorse any modifications made to this document and in no event shall the AAP be liable for any such changes.

This toolkit has been developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The authors, editors, and contributors are expert authorities in the field of pediatrics. No commercial involvement of any kind has been solicited or accepted in the development of the content of this publication.

This toolkit includes material provided by organizations other than the American Academy of Pediatrics. Statements and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Inclusion in this publication does not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The American Academy of Pediatrics is not responsible for the content of the resources mentioned in this publication.

