

5 reasons why reading with your child is important:

Studies prove that the most important thing parents can do to prepare young children for success in school is to read aloud with them daily.

Reading helps children build listening skills, vocabulary and memory.

Children develop much of their capacity for learning and reading within the first three years of life.

A child who has been read to for 30 minutes a day from infancy to age 5, has been exposed to 900 hours of “brain food.” If that time is reduced to 30 minutes weekly, the child loses 770 hours of reading exposure!

The size of a child's vocabulary is a strong predictor of future reading skills. Preschoolers with a large vocabulary tend to become proficient readers.

Imagine if every child had five years of education before kindergarten. That's what United Way and its partners are promoting with Born Learning and Reading Matters.

The **Born Learning** Campaign is built on three cornerstones: awareness, education, and action. United Way of America, the Ad Council and Civitas have formed an unprecedented partnership around bornlearning. Through advertising, parent education and community impact, bornlearning will help parents and caregivers take action to provide quality early learning opportunities for young children.



Born Learning takes early learning research and translates it into activities and educational tools for parents and caregivers. There are tips for learning on the go, answers to help care for young children, fact sheets on a child's ages and stages, and much more.

bornlearningSM

Reading Matters Is a program focused on improving the vocabulary and language skills of the children in Yellowstone County so they are better prepared for school and life. United Way of Yellowstone County is doing this by educating parents about the importance of reading to their children and by providing age-appropriate books to children ages birth to six.



For more information, visit us online at
www.unitedwayyellowstone.org

or call:

United Way of Yellowstone County
406.252.3839

Tips for parents
on reading
with their children

Reading Matters



Your child is born learning,
and you are your child's
first and best teacher

www.bornlearning.org

United Way
of Yellowstone County



When reading to babies:

- Hold your baby close to you. The warm closeness helps to create a positive feeling toward books and reading in your child.
- Expect your baby to touch, grab and taste. This is how they learn. Offer your baby a toy to hold or chew on while listening to the story.
- Point to, name and talk about things in the pictures. Babies begin to understand language by hearing words spoken over and over again.
- Ask questions about what's going on like "Where's the...?" "What's that...?" Point to the answers.
- Read early and often. Make reading a part of your child's life from day one.



- Choose simple books. Look for ones with sturdy, cardboard pages and brightly colored pictures.
- Keep book-sharing times short. Read a few pages at a time and gradually lengthen the number of pages.

When reading to toddlers and preschoolers:



- Read slowly. This helps your child make sense of what's happening in the story.
- Vary your voice when reading. Use different voices for different characters and emotions.
- Pause every now and then. Ask your child to name objects, make sounds, repeat rhymes or phrases, or guess what might happen next.
- Talk about the book. Point out details your toddler might have missed, and ask a few simple questions about the story.
- Read throughout the day. Think beyond bedtime! Read to your child during meals and tub-time, while waiting for dinner to cook, or whenever you have a few spare minutes.
- Allow for some wiggle room. Some toddlers have a hard time sitting still. Continue reading aloud even if your child moves from your lap. They are still listening!

Ideas for soon-to-be readers

Children are "soon-to-be readers" when they know most of the letters of the alphabet and some of the letter sounds.

When reading together:

- Move your finger under the words as you read aloud. This helps your child connect printed words to spoken words.
- Talk with your child about the characters and events that take place in the story.
- Encourage your child to help fill in rhyming words and to use clues in the pictures to figure out simple words.
- Keep a positive tone so that your child views reading as an enjoyable activity.

Other ways to help your child:

- Have plenty of paper, crayons, and pencils readily available for your child to use, and create a place to display their pictures and writing.
 - Have fun with letters and sounds by playing "I spy something that starts with a 'p' sound..." or make a list together of words you know that begin with the 'm' sound.
 - Leave notes for your child to discover and read on the refrigerator or in a lunch bag.
 - Take your new reader to the library to sign up for his or her own free library card.
 - Show your child that reading is important by being a reader yourself.
-