

# Tips for Reading Aloud to Toddlers

## Use your voice!

*No one loves funny sound effects more than your toddler does. Don't be afraid to go over the top with weird noises as you read. Your toddler will start to imitate you.*

## Be a role model.

*Your toddler is happily amusing himself with a toy. Feeling too guilty to read while your child is awake? Grab a magazine and relax! One of the top tips for building literacy in kids is to be a role model and show him how you love to read too. You may be surprised to find your baby leafing through a pile of books by himself as well.*

### **Your child may want to "read" the book with you.**

*He may ask questions, turn the pages back and forth, and ask you to read specific parts that interest him. Encourage this!*

### **Don't expect your toddler to sit still for a book.**

*Toddlers need to MOVE, so don't worry if they act out stories or just skip, romp, or tumble as you read to them. They may be moving, but they are listening.*

### **Encourage play that involves naming, describing, and communicating.**

*Set up a zoo with stuffed animals. Put your toddler in charge and ask lots of questions.*

### **Recite rhymes, sing songs, and make mistakes!**

*Pause to let your toddler finish a phrase or chant a refrain. Once your toddler is familiar with the rhyme or pattern, make mistakes on purpose and get caught.*

### **Every day is an adventure when you're a toddler!**

*Choose books about everyday experiences and feelings. Your child will identify with the characters as they dress, eat, visit, nap, and play.*

Sources: ReadingRockets.org and Scholastic Raise a Reader: A Parent Guide to Reading for Ages 0-2

### **Keep reading short, simple, and often!**

*Toddlers frequently have shorter attention spans than babies. Look for text that is short and simple. Read a little bit, several times a day.*

### **Ask questions!**

*Take time to listen to your toddler's answers. Toddlers have strong opinions and interesting ideas about the world. Encourage your toddler to tell you what he or she thinks. You'll build language skills and learn what makes your toddler tick at the same time.*

### **Not having fun?**

*Try a different story or a different time during the day. Reading with a very young child is primarily about building positive experiences with books, not finishing every book you start.*

### **Play to their favorites!**

*Read favorite stories again and again. Seek out books about things your toddler especially likes –trains, animals, the moon. These books may extend a toddler's attention span and build enthusiasm for reading.*

### **Choose engaging books.**

*Books featuring animals or machines invite movement and making sounds. Books with detailed illustrations or recurring items hidden in the pictures are great for exploring and discussing.*