# A Picture Book for Learning

### Storytelling and Listening

Before a child reads independently, she needs to engage in shared book reading to expand her understanding of the rules about printed material. Reading to toddlers strengthens their understanding of both printed material and oral language. This practice guide focuses on encouraging the use and understanding of printed material. It includes strategies to strengthen this important emergent literacy skill.

### What is the practice?

Toddlers begin to learn how to read a book when sitting with an adult looking at and talking about the printed words and pictures. This exploration of books helps toddlers understand that printed letters and words have meaning.

### What does the practice look like?

Help a toddler understand that the printed material (pictures, letters, words) in a book has meaning. This happens when you talk with the child while pointing out pictures, words, or letters that match what you are saying. Ask a toddler to find the picture of a dog while you point out the word dog in the text. This is an example of how to help a child make this connection.

### How do you do the practice?

There are many opportunities for the sharing of a book with a toddler. These opportunities may include waiting for other children to arrive in the morning or waiting for a sister to come after school is out.

- Be sure the books are of interest to the child. Toddlers always seem to have one or two favorite books which you can have available. Also, do not hesitate to have some new books about topics that they like.
- As you talk about the book, point to pictures, words, or letters. For example, "This word is dog. Show
  me the picture of the dog." "This letter is A, and that is
  the first letter of your name, Albert."
- Sometimes when you are reading a sentence, put your finger under the words you are reading. This helps the toddler learn that our words are read starting at the left side of the page and moving to the right.
- As you "read" the book, let the child hold the book and turn the pages. Do not worry if pages get skipped.
   With a toddler, reading every page is not necessary.
   Letting the child hold the book and explore it encourages her active participation in the reading experience.
- Smiling and commenting on her exploration of the book or attempts to answer your questions shows her that she did well. A little encouragement will help keep her involved in the activity.



# How do you know the practice worked?

- Does the toddler notice the printed words or letters as you talk about them?
- Does the toddler seem to enjoy looking at books with words?
- Does the child point to letters and words trying to say them?



## Take a look at more ways to share books



## "Find What I Say"

Matt is a toddler who likes looking at books with adults. Matt's home visitor taught Matt's mom a book game called "Find What I Say." It has become one of Matt's favorite games. Using a well-liked book, Mom points to a word and says the word. Mom then playfully says, "I don't think Matt can find the picture." Matt finds the picture, points to it, bursts out laughing, and joins the adults in applauding for himself.

# "Reading" the Title

Once a week, David and his mom have a home visitor who comes to see how 22-month-old David is doing. The home visitor helps David decide which book he wants to read. Mom reads the title, Goodnight Moon, while she points to each word. She encourages David to repeat the title and David says, "Moon." The home visitor says, "Yes, you're right, 'Moon.'" Mom reads both words in the title again, pointing to the words while David says, "G'moon." The home visitor comments to David's mom that he seems to like "reading" the title of the book because he keeps asking for it.



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# Signs and Reading

Nina is a 22-month-old toddler who has a hearing impairment. Her mom uses both sign language and speech while they are looking at Nina's favorite books. While Mom reads, she signs and points to the words in the book. This helps Nina make the connection between the signed words and letters and printed words and letters. Nina likes her new alphabet book the best.

