



USEP-OHIO PARENT TIP: Healthy Babies Love Books!

This brief Parent Tip is provided at no cost by United Services for Effective Parenting-Ohio, Inc. as a tool to assist parents, teachers, grandparents and all who help to care for and to raise our children. For more information on this and other tools from USEP-OHIO refer to the conclusion of this Parent Tip.

Babies and toddlers love to be read to, especially by the people who love and care for them. What could be better than being cuddled and loved as they hear your voice, feel cared for and learn to see and understand the world. It is never too early to begin reading to a child, and hopefully you will never stop.

How do babies and young children benefit?

- They have fun.
- Their brains develop as they hear new sounds and stories.
- They learn new words and see new things.
- They experience art, symbols and pictures.
- They become good listeners.
- They make connections with emotions and experiences.
- They feel calm when cuddled, and associate reading with feeling loved and contented.
- They are more likely to become good readers and succeed in school.

Since baby brains grow and change quickly, talking, singing and cuddling will help baby to relate with parents and caregivers.

Babies and toddlers will learn more now and later, and have fun with all of the people who care for them.

Parents should choose -

- ✓ Board or cloth books - that will not tear or hurt baby.
- ✓ Picture books - with clear, bright pictures.
- ✓ Nursery rhymes and Mother Goose - that repeat rhythms babies love to hear.
- ✓ Finger plays - like *This Little Piggy Went to Market* or *Hickory*,

Dickory, Dock.

✓ Music and Songs - that are playful and soothing like *Hush Little Baby*.

✓ Simple books - like *Goodnight Moon* or stories created from imagination.

✓ Games and Activities –Try *Baby Games: The Joyful Guide to Child's Play from Birth to Three Years* by Elaine Martin or *Baby's Game Book* by Isabel Wilner.

How can you be sure baby will listen? Choose books that are fun to read, and only for a few minutes of time. Babies will listen longer as they grow.

- **Plan to repeat and reread your baby's favorites time and again.**
- **Read every day in a quiet place with radio and TV turned off.**
- **Repeat sounds and motions that your baby can do with you.**
- **Be sure to tell stories about your baby and about the family.**
- **Keep baby's books in a special place and reward baby with time to "read" himself.**
- **Let baby see you reading; children are better readers when parents are readers.**

Go to your local library story time and ask librarians for help finding books you'll love!

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