

# Telling stories to young children in everyday life



## Suggestions for parents

**Telling stories with young children is an important building block of developing talk, reading and writing. We know that it is important that children grow up sharing and learning to read books, but children also need to experience the joy of listening to stories without books. This is something parents and carers can do wherever they are and whenever they have a few minutes! Here are some storytelling tips...**

### Babies and young children love stories, every day, anywhere!

- fun and closeness from sharing stories is a joy to share
- children enjoy cuddling together and the sound of your voice
- tell stories at any time - in the bath, the garden, the car, on the bus, at mealtimes or bedtime
- children can enjoy stories about things that happen in the family
- try including the names of family members, pets, your street name to make your stories more personal
- tell stories in all the languages that your family uses at home - all languages are important in your child's development
- children like to hear stories again and again; having favourite stories that they hear - over and over - builds their confidence to tell stories themselves and helps them become better readers as they get older

### Everyone can tell stories

- be playful! There are no 'wrongs and rights' - just make up your story or tell versions of traditional tales
- try out different voices for the characters in the story
- ask your child who they want to be in the story, or what will happen, this helps children become part of the story telling and keeps them involved
- repeat phrases or sounds - this helps children enjoy repeating sounds, words and phrases as they play with language
- encourage children to make up their own sounds and words as they join in the telling
- try making up a story about a favourite toy, a family event, going shopping, a pet



## The more stories children hear – the more they learn

- when you tell stories to your child, you are helping them to learn how stories work
- storytelling helps children to understand that a story has a beginning and an end
- as children learn and repeat parts of the story themselves, they too are becoming story tellers
- children can enjoy talking about what happens next in a story, this develops their language
- simple finger puppets or objects can be useful for children to act out a story

## Parents can...

- create **opportunities** for telling stories whenever and wherever they have time
- show **recognition** of what their children know and can do are they join in the story listening and telling
- share spontaneous and planned **interactions** with their children around telling stories
- be good **models** of story tellers – making up stories, telling traditional tales from many cultures, using character voices, playing with words and sounds – to make storytelling fun

## Everyone loves a good story

• • • • **Some parents say they don't feel confident telling stories without a book but if you make a start, you'll become more confident and you'll find it's something pleasurable to share with your child, which doesn't cost anything at all. Stories are a really important part of children's early learning, but above all, sharing the telling of a story can be a lovely way to spend time relaxing and having fun together!**

For more information:

[www.real-online.group.shef.ac.uk/index.html](http://www.real-online.group.shef.ac.uk/index.html)

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