

Sharing books with your baby

Sharing books is a wonderful way to help your child learn to talk, and it's the ideal opportunity to share a cuddle at the same time.

- Find a quiet place. Turn off the TV or radio so there are no distractions.
- As well as reading the story, talk about the pictures. If there's a picture of a dog, talk about a dog that you know.
- Give your child time to respond to your chatter.
- Don't put any pressure on your child to name the pictures, but if she copies your words, praise her and say the word again for her.
- Visit your library for different books – it's free to join. Don't worry if books get damaged; libraries understand that this sometimes happens.
- Don't read for too long. Young children get bored quickly so little and often is best.
- Let other grown-ups – grandparents, carers and older brothers and sisters – join in too.
- It's good to share favourite books again and again. Repetition helps children to understand and remember the language they hear.
- Remember, you're not teaching your child to read. You learn to talk a long time before you learn to read, and book sharing is a wonderful way to help your child's language development.

