

How Do I Read to My Infant ?

Read when you're in a positive mood, when you feel like relaxing.

Select a book that you would like to read.

Read when an infant is likely to want to sit still for a story. Establish regular times for reading, but read occasionally at special times as well.

Settle the child down for reading. Sit in a favorite chair or turn on a light.

Make reading **a comfortable and warm experience**. Be sure both you and your child are relaxed. This is a *special* time—for you both. Communicate that!

Be responsive. If the child reaches out, encourage the reaching and linger on that page for a longer time. But if the child is starting to get restless, speed up the story, change the words, skip a page. Vary your voice; change your rhythm, even your position.

Use the sound of your voice effectively. Read **softly**, but with accents and expression.

Point to things in pictures as you are reading and relate them to the story.

Go over the book a second time—not reading it all but just stopping at favorite pictures.

End gently. Talk about the book and then gradually move on to a new activity.

Repeat a few familiar books over and over; but at the same time, introduce new stories. Read several books at one sitting if the infant is enjoying the reading.... and the “bonding.”

When your child is teething give him/her something quiet to chew on (not keys or a rattle!). When the child is grabbing, give him/her something soft, perhaps a stuffed animal, to hold.

Store the books on a shelf where the child can see them, not with toys. Don't put books in the playpen where they are likely to be kicked, torn and chewed. Keep easily damaged books out of your infant's reach when there is no supervision. **Books are precious**. Help your child to learn that early.

As you read you will begin to feel a very special bond forming between you and your child. Reading is fun. Reading is a family affair. Reading is fundamental.

Raise a Reader!

For your new-born: Read *Mother Goose* rhymes, fairy tales, a magazine or a novel that you love, while cuddling your baby. The sound and rhythm of your **soft voice** reading aloud will comfort and will create a special **routine** for both you and your little one.