

## **STORY RETELLS**

Story time is a very important part of the parent-child relationship as it is a wonderful sharing activity. It is through books and stories that parents can help their child to extend their language.

Below are a few handy hints to help you make story time a real sharing language experience.

Before beginning the story, ask yourself:

- Is the story suitable for my child?
- Will it keep my child's interests?
- Are we both comfortable?
- Do I have my child's attention?
- Is there anything likely to distract you or your child before you finish?

### **Home Program**

1. On the first night choose a book (see below for relevant types of books). Read the book to your child.
2. On the second night choose the same book and talk about the pictures in your own words. Talk about what is happening in the story, just by describing the pictures.
3. On the third night, take turns with your child talking about a page each in your own words on what is happening in the pictures of the story. Support your child by asking questions if they are not sure.
4. On the fourth night let your child tell the story by themselves. You may need to ask a lot of questions to support your child through the story.
5. On the fifth to seventh night let your child continue to practise telling the story and gradually reduce the amount of questions you ask and the support you give.
6. Ask your child to tell the story to someone else (eg the other parent, siblings, grandparents, adult friends or family). Try to limit the support given to your child, Give lots of praise when they are done.

This program requires using the same book over the course of the week. You may find that your child only needs one or two practises on their own as they become more confident with their story telling abilities.

### **What Ages, What Stories?**

1-2 years

- Stories about familiar things such as toys, pets and objects jingles, rhymes and songs.
- Made up stories are enjoyed, particularly if the child himself appears.

- No plot, just a simple series of repetition and patterns.
- Story should contain lots of large, simple pictures.

### 3 years

- Child is now more possessive and assertive as well as being more interested in other people's pets, toys, holidays etc.
- Plot should be simple
- One central hero
- Since the child is learning more about adults they see regularly, but do not know stories about these people are appropriate as they help build confidence with unknown adults.
- Pictures can be smaller but there should still be lots of them.

### 4 years

- Stories now have a definite but simple plot about animals and people they may not have seen, but are familiar through pictures.
- Stories are appropriate about occupations, work and overcoming difficulties.
- Children at this age are also ready for stories about the "naughty" or "mischievous" child that does silly things.
- Sometimes wordless books can be fun, as the story can change each time the child "reads" it.

### 4½ to 5 years

- Children see themselves as "little men and women" (elves and fairies) and possessing magical powers hence fairy stories are particularly enjoyed at this age.
- Stories that lend themselves to dramatisation and give expression to feelings of responsibility, sorrow, sympathy, nonsense, mischief or happiness etc.
- Stories that give simple information and answer questions.
- Wordless books are great for this age group too.