

Question:

I want my child to be a good reader....

What do I need to do?

You are off to a good start by sending your child to Head Start! However, we need your help. Good readers 1) have someone to talk with them about 2.5 hours per day, 2) have someone to read to them several times each week, and 3) have lots of opportunities to write. Children are not in Head Start enough hours for all of this to occur.

EMAA Head Start parents have LOTS of excellent ideas on how our children can become good readers. Read “EMAA Parents Ideas to Promote Literacy.” In addition, here are some specific ideas that help children to become good readers.

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD

Who talks with your child--and listens to him or her?

Successful readers have people in their world who talk with them.

Let family and friends who care about you and your child know that this is a way they can really help.

It takes a village to raise a child.

Teaching children vocabulary words.

- Talk about what your child is doing—and what you are doing.
- Respond to your child’s sounds, words and questions.
- Talk about books—this is even more important than reading the words.

Teaching children listening skills.

- Sing along with the radio or your CDs—teach your child the words.
- Talk to your child about what interests him or her.

Concerns parents have

My child does not talk very much, if at all. What do I do?

- 1) Don’t let people make negative comments about your child not talking. If a child is told he doesn’t talk, well, he believes this and doesn’t talk.
- 2) Talk to your child anyway—even though this feels strange when you don’t get an answer back. She is picking up new vocabulary this way.

My child won’t stop talking! What do I do?

- 1) Tell yourself that your child is on his way to doing well in school—and listen, and find others to listen, as much as possible!
- 2) Teach your child talking manners. (Some adults never learned these!) Your child may need a hand signal to remind her to wait her turn to talk.

Note about television

Children, for some reason, don’t learn much about vocabulary from television. They seem to need someone who cares about them to learn to talk well.