

Ten Benefits that highlight the importance of reading with young children

We all know that reading to our children is important. But did you know that toddlers and pre-schoolers who are read to every day have many advantages and benefits? Not only does reading enhance a child's vocabulary, and to help them understand how to read and write, but reading aloud to children also helps them to understand different topics about the world and everyday life. The importance of reading cannot be emphasised enough in young children and we as educators and parents need to make reading a priority.

1. Reading to young children sets them up to succeed

The more you read to your children, the more knowledge they absorb, and knowledge is important in all aspects of life. There have many studies that show reading to babies and toddlers gives them a head start and helps to prepare them for school later down the line. After all, reading with your children gives them the skills needed for when they start to read themselves.

It is important that children learn to follow words across the page from left to right, and turn pages, which are pre-reading skills that benefit children and help them to become better readers later on. Children who enjoy reading not only do better in language and literacy subjects, but in all of the different subjects as well.

2. Reading develops language skills

While you may speak with your children every day, the vocabulary you use is often limited and repetitive. Reading books ensures that your child is exposed to vocabulary on different topics, which means they hear words or phrases which they may not hear otherwise in their day to day lives. The more words they know, the better. For children who speak more than one language, reading is an easy way to help their language skills and is important to develop their fluency.

3.Exposure to reading exercises your child's brain

Reading to young children affects their brain activity and may just give them that boost they need to support and promote their early reading skills. Research shows that specific areas of the brain are affected when young

children have reading exposure at home from an early age. These areas are critical for a child's language development.

4. Reading enhances a child's concentration

While you may think it is useless reading to a toddler who wants to constantly turn pages, swap books, or throw them around altogether, reading with your little one is extremely important at this age. By consistently reading to your child every day, your child will learn to concentrate and sit still for longer periods of time, which can help later on when they go to school.

6. A range of books teaches children about different topics

Providing your child with different types of books on different topics, or even in different languages for bilingual kids, gives them a wide range of information for them to learn. There are informative books on topics such as different animals, places or objects etc, and there are also different books to help teach children about important life skills such as sharing, being kind, and diversity. There are also some amazing personalized books which make great gifts!

5. Reading together encourages a thirst for knowledge

Reading to your children leads to questions about the book and the information within. It gives you a chance to speak about what is happening and use this as a learning experience. It may also develop an interest in different cultures or languages. There is nothing better seeing a child who loves to learn.

7. Reading develops a child's imagination and creativity

One of the great benefits of reading with children is watching their growing imagination. When we really engage in a book we imagine what the characters are doing. We imagine the setting as reality. Seeing the excitement on a child's eyes when they know what is going to be on the next page, or having them guess what is going to happen is one of the most amazing things to experience.

8. Reading books with children helps to develop empathy

When a child can put himself into the story it helps them to develop empathy. They identify with characters, and they feel what they are feeling. Children begin to understand and relate to emotions.

9. Books are a form of entertainment

With so much technology these days, it is difficult not to get caught up in all the hype of it all. TV, Video games, smart phones and apps are popular among children. However, reading a good book that your child is interested in can be just as entertaining. With all of the negative affects of screen time, choosing a book that interests your child, and either reading it together, or letting them flick through pages alone, is definitely a better option. One of the main benefits that highlights the importance of reading with babies and toddlers, is that they are more likely to choose a book to read for pleasure over another activity when they are bored.

10. Reading together helps to create a bond

There's nothing better than cuddling up to your little one and reading a book or a bedtime story together. Spending time with one another, reading, and talking, can bring parents closer to your children. For parents who work, or have a busy lifestyle, relaxing with your child and simply enjoying each other's company while reading can be a great way for you both to wind down, relax, and bond.

“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.” — Emilie Buchwald

With so many benefits that highlight the importance of reading, we as educators and parents need to prioritise reading in a child's early years to help them to succeed later in life.

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