

Education News & Notes

Reading At Home Boosts Children's Success In School

(NAPSA)—When children struggle with reading, it may have less to do with what's happening in school and more to do with what's not happening at home.

Some 40 percent of fourth grade students can't read a simple paragraph, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

A new survey sponsored by the Pizza Hut BOOK IT! program, however, reveals that nearly half of all parents believe the leading cause of the reading problem in America is that parents do not spend enough time reading with their children at home.

Parents were much less inclined to place blame on distractions such as television or the quality of school instruction. In addition, parents were nearly unanimous in saying good reading skills are extremely important for children.

Reading aloud at home is one solution that can be both enjoyable and beneficial.

"Reading aloud is one of the most important things parents can do for their children, and it can be a fun family activity," said Leslie Tubbs, director of the Pizza Hut BOOK IT! Program.

Here are some tips from the experts for starting a family reading aloud routine:

- Establish a regular time and place. Reading every day for just 15 minutes is more beneficial than reading for a longer period of time less frequently.

- Keep reading aloud as your kids grow. Even children in mid-



Survey says families should make reading at home a bigger priority.

dle school grades benefit from reading aloud.

- Vary reading material with newspapers and magazines. Let older children choose topics such as sports and entertainment.

- Being an expressive reader takes practice. When you read every day, your skills will improve.

BOOK IT!, exclusively sponsored by Pizza Hut, has for 18 years been the nation's largest reading incentive program. Since 1985, Pizza Hut has invested nearly a half billion dollars in BOOK IT! For the 2002-03 school year, BOOK IT! will reach more than 20 million K-6 students.

More on the survey can be found at www.bookitprogram.com.