

Encouraging Children To Read

(NAPSA)—It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of literacy in a child's life—and experts say one of the best ways to get young kids turning pages early is to read aloud to them regularly.

Try these tips for engaging youngsters in reading:

- Make reading a habit before bedtime, after lunch or after naptime.

- Snuggle with your child and her favorite blanket or toys as you read.

- Look for books that are about things that interest your children.

For example, does your child like cars, insects or animals?

- Don't be afraid to ham it up when reading. Use different voices for characters. Get comfortable by practicing ahead of time.

- Point to words as you read. Ask children to find specific words or words that have a particular letter.

- Read stories again and again. Children enjoy repetition and it helps them become familiar with the way stories are organized.

When you don't have time to sit down with a book, there are lots of other ways to help your child learn how to read—and have fun doing it. For instance:

Watch Together

You and your child can tune in to television shows such as "Between the Lions," which airs daily on PBS Kids. The program was designed to foster the literacy skills of its viewers, while playfully demonstrating the joys of reading. The series features many popular book titles, and the new season, beginning September 17,



Favorite characters can help interest young children in reading.

includes an award-winning series of books for emerging readers from Candlewick Press: "Brand New Readers." Kids can use the books at home to read along and experience the excitement of seeing the characters come to life on television.

For more information, visit www.pbskids.org/lions.

The Name Game

Hand-print labels in your child's room (chair, table, window, books, etc.) to help get her reading. You can also use labels on her clothes, lunch box, bike or virtually anything else you can think of. The key is to get your youngster involved.

Make Letters

Make letters out of modeling clay, pipe cleaners or cooked spaghetti. Then use the letters to spell your child's name, names of family members and pets, and other familiar words. You can also have your child form letter shapes with his body to spell out words—or try acting out the chorus of the song "YMCA" with him!