

## Reading for pleasure with babies and two year olds.

Families reading regularly to babies and young children is on a dramatic decline. Current research suggests that only 45% of 0 – 2 year olds are read to, daily, by their parents/carers.

We know reading for pleasure is more important to a child's educational success and life chances than the parents' socio-economic status. We also know that reading to children is good for a child's well-being and mental health. Imagination, empathy, vocabulary and communication skills flourish when babies and children are read to daily.

[Egmont Press](#) explored **barriers** with sharing books in the home. They found that parent/carers;

- Do not know that reading aloud to their babies and young children is directly linked to positive educational outcomes.
- Say their baby/child prefers to look at a screen.
- There's not enough time in the day/week to share a book or they are too tired.
- Not a confident reader and don't find reading easy.
- Do not know that they should read stories in their home language.

Children feel loved, secure and a deep sense of well-being when they are read to. This brings happiness, comfort and reassurance. [Egmont Press](#)

### More barriers:

- Many parents/carers have a limited exposure to a wide range of books with most books purchased in the local supermarket/ discount stores.
- Feel reading is something that happens in schools where a child learns to read.



Babies and children who are read to daily, for pleasure, perform better at school in all subjects and have higher levels of well-being, but many parents feel their baby/child prefers screen time that looking at a book.

## Sharing the message with parents

Practitioners could consider:

- Developing a display or poster around the importance of sharing books at home
- Introduce a lending library in your setting with [age appropriate books](#) and dual language texts.
- Visit your local library with parents and enroll children to the [library](#) when they join your setting.
- Hold coffee mornings / creative drop in sessions and share simple, fun [story telling](#) activities with parents.
- Invite parents/carers in to watch a skilled practitioner sharing stories with their child.
- Create a 'Catch Me Reading' display. Inviting parents/carers to share photographs of themselves sharing books with their children. This could include sharing books with siblings, grandparents, pets, even stuffed toys! Practitioners could display photographs of themselves reading outside the setting.
- Regularly include book recommends for babies, 2 and 3 year olds and older children in your newsletter to parents/carers.
- Add books to your domestic play areas and model reading stories to dolls and stuffed toys.
- Add book boxes/baskets to cosy spaces and dens/tents in the inside and outside environment.
- Share the Being Two parent guide to sharing books.