

THE CITY SPEAKS

A PARENT NEWSLETTER BY DISTRICT 75 SPEECH-LANGUAGE PROVIDERS

Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

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The winter season is here! This issue of The City Speaks will provide you with information on how you can engage your child in literacy based activities. As speech providers, we rely on you, the parents, to continue working on **your child's communication goals** at home and in the community. Citywide Speech Services (CSS) is committed to maintaining a strong home-school connection. Past issues of The City Speaks are available on the Citywide Speech Services website - <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/RelatedServices/Speech/default.htm>. If you have any questions regarding speech, language and/or communication issues, contact your speech-language provider.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Learning how to read is one of the most important areas of language development. Literacy is a prerequisite to academic achievement, social well being, and lifetime opportunities. Whether your child is a fluent reader or just beginning to read, it is a skill that is useful for daily life routines. Parents who read to their children help create successful readers, regardless of age. It can be a pleasant and rewarding experience that you can share together. Try and set aside some time each day to read a book together.

Below are several tips that help children become good readers:

- Read various books with large colorful pictures. They are more stimulating and increase your child's attention span. For an older child, you may use simple chapter books and supplement with pictures you find in magazines or from the internet.
- When your child understands what they are reading, they will be more willing to participate. Make sure to discuss the plot and try and relate it to his/her personal experiences.
- While reading, your child may come across new and unfamiliar words. Define and discuss them with your child. This will improve their understanding of what they are reading or listening to. It is important to encourage your child to picture what they are reading. A visual image will help them better remember what they have read and the new words they have learned.
- Encourage your child to use a dictionary during reading activities. You may also want to use a picture dictionary to increase word knowledge.
- By reading with your child, he/she will also learn how a book works. For example, the beginning, the middle, the end, title, and author.
- Reading together can be used to develop writing skills. Encourage your child to write a summary or a review of the story.
- Children may also learn to predict and anticipate what happens next. You may use pictures as cues to develop these skills. By doing so, this will help expand your child's thinking skills.

IDEAS TO USE AT HOME

Here are some communication tips that you could use while reading with your child:

- Label items and actions as you go through the book.
- Ask questions, be patient and wait for your child to respond.
- Accept any form of communication that works. Do not let your child miss an opportunity to communicate. Have communication boards and devices available.
- Have your child read a simple recipe and create a snack by following the written directions.
- Encourage your child to draw a picture and tell or write a story to go along with it.

MORE READING TIPS

- When choosing a book, consider the theme of the story. Look at the print size and book size as well. If your child tends to rip pages, look for hardcover board books.
- Look for books that are motivating and of high interest to your child. Ask a librarian or salesperson at the book store to assist you in choosing books that would be a good match for your child.
- Glue objects into the book. For example, attach popsicle sticks if your child has difficulty turning pages.
- Vary pitch and tone while reading. This makes it interesting for a child when you are reading aloud. Consider using body language and gestures while you read.

Dear CITY SPEAKS,

I am a mother of two children with special needs. One of my children is a beginner reader and the other shows little interest in books. I want to help my children get more involved in reading. How can I help them get interested in books?

Signed,
"Concerned Mom"

Dear "Concerned Mom,"

The first thing to do is find books related to your children's interests and reading levels. If possible take your children to the local library and ask the librarian to direct you to the appropriate reading section. For your child who is a beginner reader, the librarian will show you where the early reader section is. These books will include level-appropriate vocabulary, sight words, and words that your child can begin to sound out. Let your child choose the book that he will be interested in reading. For your child who shows little interest, the librarian can send you to the large picture book section. Let your child browse the covers and see what attracts his attention.

Once you have found the right books, it is important to set aside some quiet time with each child for some interactive reading time. Provide your beginner reader with opportunities to practice his reading skills. Read the book to him and pause to allow him to complete a repetitive phrase, describe what is happening in the pictures, ask and answer questions, and define new vocabulary words. For the child who shows little interest focus on attending to the book. Point to the pictures with him and practice turning pages. Describe what is happening in the pictures using short phrases and whenever possible have him point to a named picture.

Provide a good reading model for your children. Let them see you reading newspapers, books, and magazines and have books available around the home. Remember, make reading fun. When you are excited about reading your child will be excited too.

Joke Time



Jokes are a fun way to practice language skills. Jokes provide a script for children with limited language as well as opportunities to interact with their peers, practice figurative language, develop vocabulary & support language processing, retention and recall skills.

For non-speaking individuals, voice output communication devices can be programmed with jokes.

Q: What does a gorilla learn in school?



A: His Ape-B-C's!

Q: What flies around the kindergarten room at night?



A: The Alpha-bat!

Q: What do you call a boy with a dictionary in his pocket?



A: Smartie-pants!

Suggested Books:

- The Snowy Day by E. J. Keats
- The Polar Express by C. Van Allsburg
- Snow by U. Shulevitz
- The Three Snow Bears by J. Brett
- The Big Snow by B. and E. Hader

- The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis
- The Long Winter by L.I. Wilder
- Mr. Poppers Penguins by R. Atwater
- Cam Jansen and the Snowy Day Mystery by D. Adler
- Winter of the Ice Wizard by M.P. Osborne

**Stay Healthy During the Holiday Season.
Cover your cough and wash your hands!**



To prevent the spread of the flu and other infections:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or the inside of your elbow- not your hand.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Don't get too close to people who are sick. Maintain a distance of 3 feet. If you get sick yourself, avoid close contact with other people.
- For more information please visit: www.nyc.gov/flu.

Winter Word Search

N S M T N J J B I S S B G A T
 U E E I F A R U F Y H T L E H
 B A A K C I C B S A Z O O Z R
 L R O K A B M F W D E J V O G
 N P E T E L F S M I Z E E T B
 J T H A T U F P U L N Z S T N
 S N O W M A N W D O T T C P X
 Y K F R A C S B O H H R E Z P
 L H A D H Z T Q G N W B C R A
 K E B O Q R I R Q A S R N W O
 Y M Z R S C M F A Q U A X I B
 E T E Q P G O C H W B T A K F
 Y S X M D G E D X O Y G V Q U
 V U U K A J R Z Z N T F S X S
 E J L B P A A Y H S G U P U K

BOOTS EARMUFFS GLOVES HAT HOLIDAYS RAIN
JACKET SCARF SNOWFLAKES SNOW SNOWMAN WINTER

Communication Board: Literacy

<p>let me</p>	<p>wow!</p>	<p>more</p>
<p>open</p>	<p>look</p>	<p>finished</p>
<p>turn page</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>no</p>

If you have any questions or topics that you would like us to address, please send an e-mail to: BMandel6@schools.nyc.gov
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