

## 5 PARENT – PROVEN TIPS TO GET YOUR CHILD TO LOVE READING

Like you, I'm a parent. I have two tiny humans that I'm raising to be good, successful people in the world. I want to set them up for success and prepare them for life. It's a big job. A HUGE job. An unthinkable job. Just like you, I wrestle with all the big parenting questions.

Am I teaching my kids how to be good people? Am I giving them the skills they need to make good decisions? Am I too hard on them? Am I too easy on them? Are they watching too much tv? Should I be sitting on the floor playing with them more than I do?

Among those questions, many of my customers and friends often ask me: How do I get my child to love reading? As parents, we know the importance of raising readers. Research validates that children that read for pleasure perform better academically. It is a given. So, how do we turn these sweet children into lifelong bookworms?

HERE ARE MY TOP 5 PARENT-PROVEN TIPS TO GET YOUR CHILD TO LOVE READING:

### **#1 ~ MAKE READING CONVENIENT**

By having books easily accessible, you will make reading convenient. Keep books at home, in the car and in your purse when out and about. At home, consider "book baskets" – put a basket at the breakfast table, in the bathroom and next to your child's bed. Having baskets of books spread around your home also creates an easy system to rotate books in and out.

It's never too early to start reading with your child. You can even read to your baby in the womb. When they are babies, let them chew on books and have them in the diaper bag to play with when out and about.

As they get older, create a reading nook or a dedicated FUN spot to read. There are so many creative ways to do this – even in small spaces. This can be a window seat, a corner of a closet, a tent or teepee or even just a comfy reading chair. Let your child have their own bookshelf that they can fill up as your home library grows. Check out my **Pinterest Board** of my favorite reading nooks.

## #2 ~ MAKE READING ENTERTAINING & INTERACTIVE

Reading aloud is a great way to snuggle up and create a strong bond with your children. When it is time to read aloud, let your child pick out the book to read. Yes, even if it's the same book you've read 10 times in a row, that's okay! You can mix it up to be a little silly. You want to entertain your children and involve them in the story. Some of my favorite ways to engage my little readers include:

- Ask questions: Get in their head, ask them what they think might happen next or what they see in the illustrations. This is a great way to encourage reading comprehension, as well.
- Mix up the story: Do you have a story you've read over-and-over? Mix up the names of the characters or the words. Insert your child's name into the story. They'll be all giggles over how you mixed up the story that they know and can practically recite to you.

- Pick interactive books: Find books that keep your kid's hands busy! Some of my favorites are **shine-a-light** books where you read with a flashlight, the **There's a Mouse About the House** where a mouse moves his way through the story, **My First Book About the Orchestra** which plays the sound of each instrument or **Story Path** where the kids decide what path the story takes. These titles make reading even more fun because kids are involved in the story's

If your child isn't too focused on the story or even distracted, keep on reading– don't give up. If your little one doesn't have the attention span to sit still for storytime, keep their hands busy with a toy while you continue to read.

### **#3 ~ REWARD READING**

Hype up reading by rewarding your little readers. Creating a reading challenge or reward chart to track how many books you've read. This is a great way to reward reading with more books! For older children, allow them to stay up later if they are reading. They get an extra 15 minutes past bedtime to read. Praise your kiddos when you see them grab a book on their own or ask you to read to them. The positive reinforcement that you provide your children when reading will last a lifetime.

### **#4 ~ LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

As with anything we do as parents, your children are watching. Sometimes it feels like they're watching every move you make – the good, the bad and the ugly! This is one easy aspect of your life that you can lead by example and be a reading role model.

When you have some downtime (I know... few and far between!), put your phone down and grab a book. Your kids will notice! One of my favorite mom-tips is if you are feeling tired the next day, mention that you stayed up too late reading. Talk to your friends about books and make sure your kiddos overhear you.

When picking out a gift, select a book. Bring books with you to waiting rooms and always offer a book to your child before electronics or a toy. If your kids are curious about a specific topic, grab a book and look up the answer. As your child begins reading on their own, you can also grab a book and read together. Make it special that you both have reading time before bed together. Show your children how books can unlock their imagination and the world.

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## #5 ~ MAKE IT A HABIT

Make reading a habit in your home. A ritual. Make it part of your routine so your child comes to expect that you always read together at a certain point in the day. My kids know that we read books before bedtime. We've done that since they were babies. It's just part of what we do. We take baths, read books and go to bed. If bedtime isn't ideal, read books in the mornings as your kids wake up. If your child is squirmy, consider reading books while they're in the bath so they can listen while they play in the water. Read after naps or while having an afternoon snack. Find your time and be consistent.

Make a goal to bring new books into your home. Go to the library monthly. Get your child a library card! Experts suggest to introduce new books each time you size up in clothes or shoes. Join our **book box subscription** to make sure you always have new books in your home library every month.

## HAPPY READING

