

# Cultivate a culture of reading

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Caxton reporter

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## **A time to bond**

Reading can be made more fun than a boring exercise. Author and senior lecturer at Embury Institute for Higher Education, Nicole Rimensberger says books represent quality time with mom or dad. "Be it with cuddles before bed, or to calm down and bond after a tantrum, or to giggle and laugh about together during the day. It's about so much more than just a book or a story at this stage, it's about fostering the relationship as well as a love of books". Little eyes are always watching and they notice the objects that occupy the hands and minds of the adults around them – is it a cell phone or is it a book? They follow an example and mimic what you do as a parent.

## **Encourage your child to read**

Rimensberger shares five ways parents can encourage their little ones to pick up a book and read it:

1. One way of getting your child excited about reading is by leaving books scattered around the house – they should be everywhere so that they become part of your child's daily life. Whenever they feel bored, they must pick up a book and read.

2. Emilie Buchwald said, "Children are made readers in the laps of their parents." So make quality time for some 'lap reading' with your little one as this strengthens both a bond between the child and a story (book), and between the child and their parent.
3. Go book shopping with your child and ask them to pick books that interest them.
4. It is normal for your toddler to treat books like objects to play with. Teach your child to respect books. Garner interest in books by exposing your young ones to books that are fun, bright and tactile. Tactile books are very attractive for young children, such as books with holes, pop-up pictures or flaps. These can provide endless entertainment for curious fingers and curious minds.
5. Parents should consider using story time as a means for fun interaction and ask your kids questions to see if they understand what you are reading to them.
6. Ask them to read to you and correct them when they get word wrong. Practice makes perfect.

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