



READ *for* 20 Campaign

Promoting Parental Involvement
in Reading **with** Children

What are the benefits of parents reading with children for 20 minutes every day?

Did you know that young children's brains develop very quickly and they take in more than we can ever imagine? Even if your baby isn't talking yet, they are listening and making sense of what you say and all that is around them. Talking with, listening to, and involving your child in what is happening day to day can make a big difference to their learning and development.



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Reading with your child in the language you all use at home:

- Introduces your child to the exciting world of stories
- Helps your child to absorb the patterns and rhythms of language, especially from songs and rhymes
- Helps your child to improve their reading skills, whether they are listening to you read or doing it themselves
- Increases your child's vocabulary as they learn new words
- Combines the benefits of talking, listening and storytelling
- Builds the foundation for strong language development
- Provides time for parents and children to bond in a fun and enjoyable way

What Children like

Children like:

- the same book over and over
- a story at bedtime or after a meal
- to choose, hold the book and turn the pages
- books about food, trucks, animals, and children or anything they can relate to
- to fill in the words in a story with ideas of their own
- to point and name things in the pictures
- books with colourful pictures.

What can I do as a parent to help my child?

Make time each day to read together. Focus on enjoying the story together and do not pressure your child to read perfectly. This helps them to develop a habit of reading for pleasure which will help them to develop their reading skills.

I don't know how to read, how can I help my child?



Every parent can help their children to read. First, find out if the school has a library with books in your local language. If there is one, collect the timetable when your children can borrow books. Then check that your child brings home books on borrowing days. Give your child time to read or share the books with you as often as possible. Follow up with the teacher if your child comes home without books.

Begin by asking your child to tell you the story using the pictures. When your child can read, encourage them to read the book out loud to you, or even just a few letters or words that they know. Children enjoy showing off what they have learnt to parents. Remember to show interest in their reading. Praise them when they have read well but also when they make an effort, even if they struggle. Where you are not sure about what they read, ask a more able reader to help.

What happens when I don't read with my child

Children need regular practice to become fluent, independent readers and any time at home spent practicing the skills will help. A child may learn to read just with the lessons they receive at school, but every minute spent reading will help them develop the skills and habit of reading. It is important to remember that learning to read takes place inside and outside the classroom.

Tips For Reading

Read the book slowly and clearly and do not be afraid to use funny voices for characters. Let your child enjoy joining in with the noises from the story.

Point to the cover and the pictures and talk about them. If there is a picture of a dog, talk about a dog that your child knows. Let your child ask questions about the pictures or story, encourage their curiosity.

Avoid putting your child under pressure to name pictures or objects unless they want to try. Help the child when you think they cannot read or make out what the picture is.

It is okay if your child wants to read the same book over and over again. The repetition is good as it helps children to understand and remember the language they hear.

g With Your Child

Find a quiet, comfortable place, turn off the TV and radio so that there are no distractions. A story at bedtime can help prepare your child for a good night's sleep.

Even older children like to be read to, but let them begin to share or take over the reading as they learn to read.

Creating a fixed time gives a child something to look forward to everyday; but it is okay if some days they do not feel like reading. You can read to them instead.

Just 20 minutes a day sharing a book with a parent can help to improve a child's reading!



Nelson's First Book!



Story and photo by Precious Mumbi Habeenzu

Meet 9-year-old Nelson, a first grader in Choma district of Zambia's Southern province. He is learning to read Chitonga. "My favorite book is called 'Ncinzi cili mucibbokesi,' (which means "What is in the Box?").

"It is about a box full of rats yet no one knows it and everyone is wondering what is in the box. It is very funny."

Nelson is a regular at the school library, which was established with help from Room to Read. At home, his mother notes, "He always has time to read story books at home. Nelson is a great encouragement to his two brothers."

“Old Man’s Hat,” Chimuka’s favourite book.



Chimuka looking for a book to check out. Photo and story by Precious Mumbi Habeenzu

Chimuka is a first grader and she loves to read. Her two older siblings (one in high school and the other a fifth grader) often bring home different stories for Chimuka to practice her reading. Her favorite book is called “Old Man’s Hat.”

“This book is about an old man who tried to cross the road but the wind blew his hat off his head and a fast moving truck crushed the poor little hat. This angered the old man that instead of trying to cross the road, he began to shout at the driver of the truck for crushing his hat,” she says with chuckles of laughter between her sentences. The day Room to Read staff visited her school, Chimuka was borrowing a book from the school library to take home to share with her family. Room to Read is confident that Chimuka will be able to borrow many books so she can spend 20 minutes a day enjoying the books with her parents and siblings and continue to develop her reading habit and interest in reading.

Meet Mutinta



Mutinta in green shirt

Mutinta is seven and in Grade 2 but she already reads like an older child. Her proud parents Fred and Lillian regularly check out her homework. With no other books in the house, her father, Fred shared the family Bible with Mutinta to help her practice her reading every day by candlelight. She is doing so well that Fred and Lillian are going to make sure that all their other children go to school too and learn to read. Lillian has been so happy with Mutinta's progress that she has even made an effort to begin learning her letters too. 20 minutes a day with an appropriate book – storybooks are great too – gives your child enough practice to become a fluent, independent reader just like Mutinta.

About the Read for 20 Campaign

For more information on how you can make this life changing decision to support the growth of your children's reading habits, contact Room to Read on +260 211 264452 / 264452
Or visit our Facebook page: Zambia Literacy month.

References/Further sources of information:

www.roomtoread.org www.wordsforlife.org.uk/3-5
www.reachoutandread.org/ www.booktrust.org.uk/readingfoundation.org/