



Launching young readers!

Reading Rockets

Reading Together: Tips for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss or Deafness

By: [Reach Out and Read](#)



You'll find sharing books together is a great way to bond with your son or daughter and help your child's development at the same time. Give your child a great gift that will last for life — the love of books.

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Infants and toddlers

Helping your child love books

You'll find sharing books together is a great way to bond with your son or daughter and help your child's development at the same time. Give your child a great gift that will last for life — the love of books.

Hearing loss ranges from partial to total deafness. Some children can hear better with a hearing aid, cochlear implant, or FM system. Others cannot. Hearing loss may last only a short time, or it may never go away. Some children are born with hearing loss. Others develop it later in life. These factors affect the challenges your child will face in learning to read.

Tips for reading with your infant or toddler

Each time you read to your child, you are helping her brain to develop. So read to your child every day. Choose books that you think your child will enjoy. Books that rhyme or repeat the same sound are good for helping your child learn the sounds letters and words make.

Since younger children have short attention spans, try reading for a few minutes at a time at first. Then build up the time you read together. Your child will soon see reading time as fun time!

Here are some things you can try:

- Read the same story again and again. This will help your child catch words he may have missed before. Explain the story as needed.
- Make sure your child can see your face and the pictures. This will help your child follow the story, even if he doesn't catch all the words.
- Have your child turn pages, touch the pictures, and lift the flaps. This will give your child practice using his hands, which gets him ready to sign.
- Use simple sign language as you read.

Suggested books for your infant

Choose board books with simple signs. Some titles include:

- [Baby Signs](#), by Joy Allen
- [My First Book of Sign Language](#), by Joan Holub
- Books by Annie Kubler, such as [My First Signs](#) and [Sign and Sing Along: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star](#)

Suggested books for your toddler

- Books by Anthony Lewis, such as [Meal Time](#), [My First Animal Signs](#), and [Play Time](#)

Preschool and school-age children

Helping your preschooler or school-age child love books

When you read to your child often and combine reading time with cuddle and play time, your child will link books with fun times together. So continue to read to your child every day. Choose books that you think your child will enjoy and look fun for you to read.

Here are some things you can try:

- Read the same story again and again. This will help your child catch words he may have missed before. Explain the story as needed.
- Make sure your child can see your face and the pictures. This will help your child follow the story, even if he doesn't catch all the words.
- Use stuffed animals to act out the story.
- Continue to teach your child to sign.

Suggested books for your preschooler or school-age child

- [Each Peach Pear Plum](#), by Allan and Janet Ahlberg
- [Jamberry](#), by Bruce Degen
- [Sheep in a Jeep](#), by Nancy Shaw

Books to help children and parents learn more about hearing loss

For children

- [Jordan Has A Hearing Loss](#), by Jillian Powell (Ages 4–8)
- [Taking Hearing Impairment to School](#), by Elaine Ernst Schneider (Ages 5–10)
- [A Button in Her Ear](#), by Ada B. Litchfield (Ages 5–10)
- [Can You Hear a Rainbow? The Story of a Deaf Boy Named Chris](#), by Nicola Simmonds (Ages 4–8)
- [I Have a Sister — My Sister Is Deaf](#), by Jamie Riggio Heelan (Ages 4–8)

For parents

- [Choices in Deafness: A Parents' Guide to Communication Options](#), by Sue Schwartz
- [Language and Literacy Development in Children Who Are Deaf](#), by Barbara Schirmer
- [Literacy and Your Deaf Child: What Every Parent Should Know](#), by David Stewart and Bryan Clarke
- [Literacy Learning for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#), by Lyn Robertson and Carol Flexer
- [When Your Child is Deaf: A Guide for Parents](#), by David Luterman

For more information

- [Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf](#) — (202) 337-5220
- [American Society for Deaf Children](#) — (866) 895-4206
- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#) — (800) 638-8255
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) — (800) CDC-INFO
- [National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities](#) — (800) 695-0285

- [Raising Deaf Kids](#) — (215) 590-7440
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"There is no substitute for books in the life of a child." — May Ellen Chase