

## Where can I find books for my baby?

- Bookshops and supermarkets often have cheap soft cover, cloth and plastic books.
- Try second hand bookshops and street markets.
- You could make books by gluing magazine pictures, photos and drawing pictures on paper and sewing the pages together.
- Reading and borrowing books is a free service at your local library. Librarians have a great range of books for all ages and the Librarians can help you find exactly what you are looking for. Some have second-hand sales.

## Other ways of playing with babies

- Even very young babies enjoy play times.
- When your baby is alert and calm try, singing to your baby while stroking her hands or legs or feet.
- If she makes a gurgling noise, gurgle a few other sounds back to her.
- Show her things in her room or other parts of the house and name them.
- Touching, talking, singing and holding, all help her to understand her world.

## For more information contact:

- Local Community Child Health Nurse
- Local Family Doctor
- Ngala Family Resource Centre Helpline  
8.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m. 7 days a week  
Telephone (08) 9368 9368  
Outside metro area - Freecall 1800 111 546  
[www.ngala.com.au](http://www.ngala.com.au)
- Parent Help Centre/Parenting Line  
Telephone (08) 9272 1466 (24hr service)  
Outside metro area - Freecall 1800 654 432
- Local Library
  - Join you and your baby.
  - Library membership is free and many libraries run Storytime sessions for babies, toddlers and preschoolers.
  - Storytime is a great way to introduce young children to the library and listening to stories.
  - It is also a good way to meet other parents who have young children.
  - Why not contact your local library and ask about Storytime for your child.
  - For more information visit [www.slwa.wa.gov.au/bb](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/bb)

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reading  
with  
babies



It's never too early to start reading to your baby. Books are a great way to entertain your baby as well as a great way to build a relationship with your child in the first months of life.

Reading is one of the ways to help your baby to learn about communication.

Communication involves listening to and understanding the messages of others and being able to respond with a clear message. Producing a clear message involves the use of speech sounds and the use of language through words and sentences, plus non-verbal behaviours like facial expressions and gestures.

## Why read to my baby?

Holding your baby and sharing a book is a very special time.

- Babies learn that reading is important when you hold them, and show them pictures in a book, and you talk about the pictures.
- Babies enjoy being read to because they like the sound of your voice and they like having you close for some special time together.
- Babies enjoy looking at the pictures and listening to the rhythm of your voice long before they can understand the words.

Books are great for encouraging a range of important skills, such as:

- talking and understanding language
- imagination
- concentration
- creativity
- listening
- problem solving.

Children whose parents read books to them when they are young often learn to speak, read and write more easily.

## How can I read with my baby?

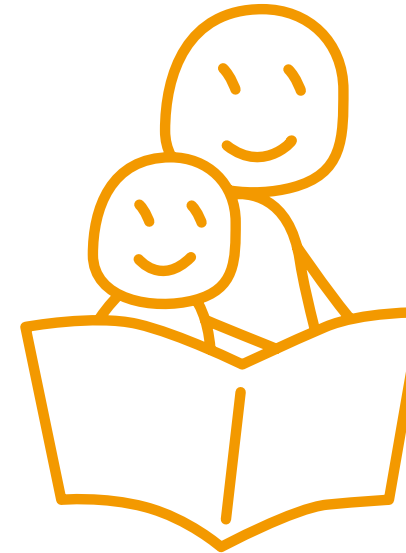
- Try to create a time for reading with your child every day when your baby is alert and showing interest in what is happening around him. It may be a good idea to read at the same time every day or in the same special chair.
- Babies see most clearly at about 20 to 25 cms, and when they are very young they like to look at clear, simple shapes which are brightly coloured.
- When reading, try to look both at the book and your baby. Point to the pictures and talk about the things your baby is looking at.
- When reading aloud, try to use your voice in many ways to make the story-time as interesting for your baby as possible - loud and soft, happy and sad.

- If you find books your baby loves, read them over and over and try to use the same reading voice each time so they get used to the pattern.
- You will need to be persistent when reading to your baby, as the length of time your baby will be able to attend to a story will grow over time.

Some parents do not like reading, but holding your baby, looking at a book, and talking about the pictures may give your baby a better start with reading than you had.

- You do not have to say the words that are written on the page - you can make up stories to go along with the pictures.

Make sharing books with your baby as much fun as possible.



## Which books are suitable for my baby?

Young babies need books with simple brightly coloured pictures, with a few words to each page.

Older babies and babies who are starting to crawl, then walk, often like books with simple pictures of things that they know (such as toys, food, cars, animals).

As soon as they get old enough to hold books, babies want to turn the pages, tear the pages, chew them and throw them. A baby's first books need to be strong, simple and cheap (so you won't worry too much if they get damaged), for example:

- cloth books
- plastic books that can be used in the bath
- strong board books
- picture books with few or no words
- books with rhymes or rhythms
- books written to Nursery Rhymes
- books with songs and hand and finger actions
- books which make noises
- books with flaps to open
- home made books with family photos, magazine pictures and drawings.

Don't use special books with thin paper pages. All babies love tearing paper.

