



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
October 14, 2009

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Reading at Every Age *Tips for Raising a Lifelong Reader*

Woodland, CA — November is Child Literacy Month and the perfect time for families to adopt daily reading habits with their children. The First 5 Yolo Children and Families Commission encourages parents and caregivers to make reading a daily part of their child's life.

“Reading aloud to your young child offers many benefits, including fostering a love of books and developing lifelong learning skills,” said Julie Gallelo, executive director of First 5 Yolo. “In fact, research shows that young children who read with their families are better prepared when they start kindergarten and are more likely to succeed in school.”

First 5 Yolo has tips for how you can make reading a daily part of your infant's, toddler's or preschooler's life.

Infants – Reading aloud provides special bonding time for parents and infants. Babies enjoy hearing the sound of a familiar voice while the words, pictures and stories stimulate their brains.

- Start slowly. Infants have short attention spans, so keep your reading time brief.
- Repeat stories and rhymes often, so your baby learns new words and sounds each time.
- Babies like brightly colored books with photos of other children and familiar objects such as toys and baby bottles. Also, choose books with pop-up characters and images that are soft to the touch, so your baby can feel different textures.

Toddlers – Reading improves toddlers' listening and speaking skills and helps them begin to understand words and phrases.

- Read and repeat. Toddlers enjoy hearing the same story repeated over and over. This helps them make connections between words and pictures.
- While reading, ask your child to turn the pages and name objects in the pictures. They can even try to guess what will happen next in the story!
- Choose the right books. Toddlers like books that show characters doing familiar things like playing and smiling. Pick books with only a few words per page and stories that rhyme for extra fun.

Preschoolers – As children prepare to enter school, daily reading habits can give them an extra boost. That is because reading builds confidence as well as vocabulary skills, both of which are important for school success.

- Make visits to the library a regular part of your activities with your children, and let them choose several books on their favorite topics. Also, ask about free resources you can enjoy together, like preschool story times. Don't forget to sign up for library cards – they're free!

- Always have a book nearby for your children, even while running errands or traveling in the car. Read while waiting at the doctor's office or at the bus stop – anytime is a good time for reading!

In partnership with Yolo County Library, bilingual story times in English, Spanish and Russian and workshops on how to share and select books with your children are offered throughout the County. For more information on story times and other programs for families, please call Yolo County Library at (530) 666-8005. Woodland Public Library also offers story times and can be reached at (530) 661-5981.

To learn more about other programs and resources for your young children please visit www.first5yolo.org.

About First 5 Yolo

Research shows a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. In November 1998, California voters passed a statewide ballot initiative to add a 50-cent-per-pack tax on cigarettes. The funds collected are utilized to fund education, health and childcare programs that promote early childhood development from prenatal through age 5. For more information about First 5 Yolo, please visit www.First5Yolo.org.

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