

Encouraging a love of reading in older children

How can I be a good role model?

A great way to be a reading role model is to discuss books with your child and show them that reading is an important part of your life. You could give them a copy of your favourite book when you were their age, or read the same book so you can talk about it together.

My child is now older – bedtime stories are a thing of the past. What could I do instead?

Instead of watching TV together in the evenings, perhaps you could try having family reading time together. Even reading for just 10 minutes a day can make a difference. Plus, reading can have a calming effect and can help everyone at home to relax and unwind.

My child is so focused on their phone or tablet; I'll never tear them away to read a book! What should I do?

If you can't lose it – use it! Technology can help to excite readers who aren't attracted to paper books. As well as e-readers, most modern phones and tablets have free apps for reading, and there are lots of free and cheap e-books available online. They might also be interested in listening to free audio books and podcasts, which might help them to catch the reading bug.

I really want my child to read, but books are so expensive!

The library is the place for you! They have a wide variety of books to borrow and membership is free. Sign your child up for their own library card and encourage them to choose books to take home that they're interested in. You could visit the library as part of your weekend routine when shopping in town.

My child hates reading novels and stories – I'll never get them to read.

Reading doesn't just mean fiction; reading is reading – it all counts. Your child may prefer reading newspapers, magazines, graphic novels, non-fiction books, plays, recipes, travel guides or poetry.

How can I get my child interested in books in the first place?

Use their hobbies as hooks! By encouraging your child to read things that interest them, you will help them to fall in love with reading. A great place to start is by pointing out books and articles that feature their favourite sports teams, bands, hobbies or films. You could also ask your librarian to recommend books on a certain topic.

My child lacks confidence and is a reluctant reader – what can I do to boost their confidence?

You could encourage them to read aloud to a younger relative or sibling. Reading to someone younger can help your child feel more confident in their reading ability and give them a sense of responsibility. Studies have also shown that reading to pets can boost the confidence of reluctant readers!

I'm not a great reader, how can I encourage my child to read?

You don't need to be a good reader to encourage your child's reading. Ask them questions about what they are reading and why they are enjoying it or not. You don't need to know anything about the book – they can tell you all about it!