What’s Inside:
Free Family Fun in L.A. County • Discount Coupons • Resources for Parents • Activities for Kids

¡GUÍA bilingüe!

Ready. Set. Grow!

family guide

READ EARLY, READ ALOUD! ISSUE • Winter 2010

Call the Parent Helpline
1-888-FIRST5-LA
(1-888-347-7855)

FIRST 5
LA
Champions For Our Children
November is Child Literacy Month and First 5 LA wants you to know that reading aloud to your child is the best gift you could give her. From the moment your little ones are born, they are learning. By reading to your children, you can help build their vocabulary and teach them to communicate, listen and build memory—so they can do their best in school.

Here are some things you can do to help develop your child’s early reading skills:

- Let her turn the pages of books.
- Reread his favorite books often.
- Read pop-up books or books with parts that move.
- Sing songs and recite rhymes.
- Point to and name objects in books, and talk about the pictures.
- Say the names of things as she sees and uses them.

So get him started with a skill that will remain with him for the rest of his life. Read to your child every day!

Read and speak to your children in any language! Hearing your words develops their language skills and improves their ability to read in English.
We all know that buying new books can be expensive, so here are a few ways to find free or affordable books:

• Visit the library! There are over 160 free libraries across L.A. County, and anyone can get a library card. Books are free to borrow, and while you are there, ask about story time where kids can listen to stories read aloud.

• Used bookstores, thrift shops and garage sales are great places to find affordable books for kids.

• Encourage family and friends to give books as gifts for birthdays, holidays, and other celebrations.

• Organize a book swap with other families you know from your local community center, daycare, preschool and church groups. Bring your child’s old books and swap them with other children’s unwanted books.

• Use some imagination! Make your own homemade books using family photos and tell each other fun stories.

Need help finding a local library?
For a list of L.A. City and L.A. County public library locations, reading events and programs, go to www.lapl.org and www.colapublib.org.

For other communities, call 1-888-FIRST5-LA or visit www.ReadySetGrowLA.org to find a library near you.

You know reading is important to help your child learn and do well in school. Having lots of books at home is a great way to make sure your child always has the chance to read. Plus, kids are more likely to read and enjoy books that they pick out, so it’s important to let them choose their own books whenever possible.
the road to reading SUCCESS!

At each age, your child is developing the different skills necessary for reading. As a parent you are helping provide the building blocks he needs to read, which will help him love reading for the rest of his life.

Reading to your baby (ages 0-1)

It’s important to start reading to your child when she is just a baby. Use funny voices and big gestures to stimulate all her senses.

Books with textures, sounds and music are a great way to connect with him. Your baby will also enjoy books he can put in his mouth as he is teething.

Use puppets, finger plays (such as “Itsy Bitsy Spider”), or props while you read to help engage all your baby’s senses.

After you read, allow your baby time to respond by moving her arms and legs and sometimes cooing to you. You can talk to your baby about her response such as “You like that book because it is about a baby kitten like we have at home.”

Try out a new reading activity each week with him, and always remember to give him lots of encouragement and praise at every age. Don’t worry if he loses interest in a book, just pick up a new one and keep reading!

Suggested Books:

- **Baby Noises** by Derek Brazell
  This beautiful multicultural picture book for babies and toddlers shows babies making lots of noise!

- **Pat the Bunny** by Dorothy Kunhardt
  Your baby will love touching the bunny’s fur, playing peekaboo and more.

- **Ten Little Fingers / Tengo Diez Deditos** by Annie Kubler
  This bilingual baby board book introduces your baby to numbers.

- **Bright Baby Animals / Bebe Listo Animales** by Roger Priddy
  This bilingual board book has fun real photos of animals.
Reading to your toddler (ages 1-3)

Read to your toddlers as often as possible and try to stick to at least one scheduled reading time each day. Choosing regular times, especially before naps or bedtime, helps children learn to sit with a book and relax.

If your toddler will let you, hold him in your lap as this helps your child feel safe, happy and relaxed. This also lets him know he has all your attention.

Your toddler wants to feel independent and successful, so offer her three or four books to choose from and let her turn the pages. Encourage her to help finish sentences in books with repetitive words and rhymes.

Ask your child questions, such as what he thinks will take place next in the story.

Read slowly enough for her to understand what is happening, and use different voices for different characters.

Talk about the pictures. Point to items and name them. Then ask your child to name them with you.

Try substituting your child’s name in the story.

Suggested Books:

Goodnight Moon
by Margaret Wise Brown
This bedtime book is a short poem with gentle calming words, perfect to put your toddler to a good night’s sleep.

Let’s Count, Baby
by Cheryl Willis Hudson
Young readers count numbers from 1 to 10 as a curious toddler wanders around her home playing with a teddy bear, toy trucks and cars, and other recognizable objects.

Richard Scarry’s Best Word Book Ever
by Richard Scarry
Favorite animal characters introduce toddlers to the names of everyday objects.

Alphabet Fiesta
An English/Spanish Alphabet Story
by Anne Miranda
This book is great for instruction in the Spanish alphabet and for inspiring art projects as well.
Reading to your preschooler (ages 4-5)

Once your child is ready for preschool, he is ready to start identifying familiar words and discovering new ones. Story time may become less about you reading to him and more about him learning to read to you, so be patient and encouraging.

Explain to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.

Point out words everywhere. Talk about the words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word everywhere you go.

Talk about writing and encourage her to practice writing her name and other favorite words.

Sing songs and read books with silly tongue twisters. This will help your child notice the sounds in words.

Connect what your child reads in his book to life around him. If reading a book about a trip to the zoo, ask him about the last time you went to the zoo together.

Read whatever books your child asks for, even if it is the same book every night for weeks and weeks.

Suggested Books:

Lola at the Library
by Anna McQuinn
Little Lola gets so much joy from her trip to the library.

Bee-bim Bop!
by Linda Sue Park
Playful drawings portray a young Korean girl helping her mother shop and prepare a delicious meal in the kitchen.

Family/La familia
by Clare Beaton
This bilingual book follows a family of teddy bears as they teach new words to young children in two languages.

Little Mama Forgets
by Robin Cruise
Celebrate the special bonds that exist between young and old in this lively Hispanic family.
Your local library is a great resource for parents and families. Not only will you find free books, but the library staff is there to provide helpful advice about reading programs and tips to help teach your children to read. Eva Mitnick is the Acting Manager, Youth Services, for the Los Angeles Public Library. She shares what parents can expect from a trip to the library.

**What is a good age to bring your children to the library?**

Come on in when you’re pregnant to check out pregnancy, parenting and baby name books. Then as soon as your baby is born, bring her in to choose some simple board books. Bring older babies, toddlers and preschoolers in to attend library story times and to choose picture books.

**Why should parents and children sign up for library cards?**

A library card is the best deal in town! It’s absolutely free, and it allows you to borrow books, movies, music, and magazines for free. All you need to get a library card is proof of your home address – a current driver’s license, California ID card or a utility bill will work. You can also use ID cards issued by the Mexican, Argentinian and Korean consulates.

**Does the library have any activities for helping parents read to children at home?**

If you bring your children to story time, not only will you learn about wonderful books, you will also learn fun songs, fingerplays and activities that will encourage your children to talk, play and learn.

**Are there any resources at the library to help parents teach their children to read?**

The best way to teach your children to read is to read to them for fun everyday, so that when it comes time for them to learn to read, they will already love books.
CRAFTS and GAMES

Babies, toddlers and young children love books that show pictures of things they recognize. A book that is about a child’s own life encourages them to enjoy reading. Creating homemade books is also a great activity to share with your children and helps them learn how to tell their own stories.

How to make a homemade book

Start by choosing from one of the following story ideas or create your own:

- Mom and baby go to the store
- Rufus the dog gets in trouble
- Baby takes her first steps
- Dad takes the kids to the park
- Making dinner with Grandma
- First day of preschool

Choose from family photos or cut out pictures from magazines or newspapers to relate to your story idea.

Paste the photos onto brightly colored construction paper. Ask your children questions about the pictures and create the story together.

You can help your little ones by writing the story out onto the paper. With your older children, let them practice writing some of the words themselves.

Remember, you don’t need the words on the page to tell the story. Each time you read your book, you can create a new story.

Reading Game
Match the colors with their pictures.

- Red
- Blue
- Yellow
- Green
Sign up to receive more great deals at www.ReadySetGrowLA.org.
Free Family Night: Native Traditions  
November 3rd, 4 – 10 pm  
Kidspace Children’s Museum  
480 N Arroyo Blvd., Pasadena  
Cost: Free  
Experience the oral tradition of Native American storytelling. Jacque Nuñez shares stories and songs of her people’s indigenous tools, instruments, games and clothing.

Autumn Festival: A Celebration of Asian Culture  
November 6th & 7th, 9 am – 5 pm  
Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach  
100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach  
Cost: Free for children 3 and under*  
The festival will feature traditional crafts, music, dance, demonstrations, cultural arts exhibits, ethnic cuisine storytelling, and much more!

L.A. Public Library - Read to Me L.A.  
November 16th, 4 – 5 pm  
Exposition Park Library  
3900 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles  
Cost: Free  
Preschool story time where parents and children receive free books, booklists and tips.

The Fabulous Holiday Christmas Lane Parade  
November 20th, 6 pm  
Huntington Park on Pacific Blvd., Los Angeles  
Cost: Free  
The streets are covered in holiday decor and surrounded with Christmas cheer, creating a family-friendly show.


Be a Part of the Read Early, Read Aloud! Contest

“Share a Moment in Reading” with us during the month of November for a chance to win a home library.

To enter the contest, submit a picture of you and your child reading and tell us why this is your favorite Moment in Reading.

Public Star Party
November 13th & December 11th, 2 – 9:45 pm
Griffith Observatory
2800 East Observatory Rd., Los Angeles
Cost: Free
Bring the kids to explore the sun, moon, visible planets and other objects and to try out a variety of telescopes.

Freshwater Marsh Tours
2nd & 4th Sat. of the month, 10 – 11 am
Friends of Ballona Wetlands
Jefferson Blvd., at Lincoln Blvd., Playa del Rey
Cost: Free
You will see a wonderful variety of birds, learn about native plants, and see how the freshwater system works. Park on the south side of Jefferson Blvd. alongside the marsh, just west of Lincoln. Meet at the Freshwater Marsh sign.

Kids Yoga on The Green with Lululemon Athletica
Every Wed., 11 – 11:45 am
The Americana at Brand in Glendale
889 Americana Way, Glendale
Cost: Free
Join certified yoga instructor Abbie Rose for a fun-filled Kids Yoga class on The Green. Recommended for 3-6-year-olds, but parents are always welcome to join in on the fun!

Live Animal Presentation
Daily, 3 – 3:30 pm
The Natural History Museum of L.A. County
900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles
Cost: Free for children under 4
Meet amazing, living animals and learn where they come from, what they eat and more!

1, 2, 3, Grow With Me Toddler Storytime
Every Thu., 10 am
Norwalk Regional Library
12350 Imperial Hwy., Norwalk
Cost: Free
For children ages 1 to 3. Both parent and child can participate in songs, nursery rhymes and fingerplays during the 30-minute circle time.

Paws to Read
Every 2nd Sat., 10:30 am – 12 pm
Hermosa Beach Library
550 Pier Ave., Hermosa Beach
Cost: Free
Practice your reading skills by reading to a therapy dog. Therapy dogs and their owners will listen to one and all! Pre-registration required (310) 379-8475.
Feeding your child healthy foods will make her a smart, healthy and strong little girl! You can encourage reading and learning as you shop and cook together with your children. Make healthy eating a reading adventure in and out of the kitchen!

Two cooks in the kitchen: There are many great children’s cookbooks available. Let him choose a healthy recipe and have him identify the foods you are using. He can also help count and measure the ingredients with you.

Shop till you drop: She can help you make your shopping list. Talk about the letters and words as you write down everything you need from the store.

Veggie tales: Making funny fruit and vegetable stories will help make eating healthy fun! Use broccoli as “little trees” and apple slices as a “little half moon” and make up a story together during snack time.

Every moment counts: Turn snack time into a learning moment by holding up different foods. Ask your child to name them and describe their colors and textures.

Make her own book: Cut labels from snack boxes or have your child draw pictures of their favorite foods. Glue them into a homemade book and call it “Snacks We Love.” You can take this book with you to the market so she can help pick out the groceries.