



Launching young readers!

Reading Rockets

Reading Together: Tips for Parents of Children with ADHD

By: [Reach Out and Read](#)



If your child has ADHD, paying attention for long periods of time can be a challenge. So, meet the challenge head-on — make reading time fun time for you and your child.

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.

Some parents suspect ADHD early on when their toddler is far more active than other children his age. Yet, the disorder often becomes more obvious when the child enters school. Often the child with ADHD may act on impulse and may have trouble following directions or sitting still. How do you know if your child is just very active or has ADHD? It is best to get an evaluation from a trained health professional.

If your child has ADHD, paying attention for long periods of time can be a challenge. So, meet the challenge head-on — make reading time fun time for you and your child. First, pick a quiet spot away from TV, radio, and video game noise. Read for short periods at a time and put the book away if your child loses interest. Pick up the book later and read for another short time period.

Although ADHD is diagnosed later in childhood, adding reading to your child's daily routine is very beneficial. Reading time can help your highly energetic child get ready for naps and bedtime. And remember — reading together for 10 minutes in the morning is a nice way to get the day started on a positive note.

Tips for reading with your infant or toddler

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:

- Buy books or borrow books from the library. Sing along with the book to hold your baby's interest. Your baby doesn't care if you can sing on key!
- Read aloud. Talk about the pictures and read the text. Help your toddler point to objects you name in the book. Ask questions about the story as a way to hold your child's interest.
- Break up short periods of reading time with play time to give your toddler a chance to move about.
- Continue to read for a few more minutes even if your child squirms off your lap. He may still be listening to the story even though he is playing near you.

Suggested books for your infant

- [Goodnight Moon](#), by Margaret Wise Brown
- Books by Rosemary Wells, such as [Itsy Bitsy Spider](#) or [Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star](#)

Suggested books for your toddler

- Books by Annie Kubler, such as [If You're Happy and You Know It](#), [Ring Around the Rosie](#), or [Row, Row, Row Your Boat](#)

Preschool and school-age children

Helping your preschooler or school-age child love books

Remember, 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.

Here are some things you can try:

- Turn off the TV and radio and find a quiet spot to read without distraction.
- Choose books that interest your child, such as books on animals or sports.
- Read aloud and talk about the pictures. Allow your child to pick books too, and ask your child to read aloud.
- Praise your child's efforts at reading!

Suggested books for your preschooler or school-age child

- [The Adventures of Taxi Dog](#), by Debra Barracca
- [Maybe A Bear Ate It](#), by Robie Harris
- [The Day the Teacher Went Bananas](#), by James Howe

Books to help children and parents learn more about ADHD

For children

- [All Dogs Have ADHD](#), by Kathy Hoopmann (Ages 4–9)
- [My Friend Has ADHD](#), by Kristin Sorra (Ages 4–10)
- [Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key](#), by Jack Gantos (Ages 9–12)

For parents

- [Parent Therapy: A Relational Alternative to Working with Children](#), by Linda Jacobs and Carol Wachs
- [Parenting Children with ADHD: 10 Lessons that Medicine Cannot Teach](#), by Vincent J. Monastra, PhD.
- [The ADD & ADHD Answer Book: Professional Answers to 275 of the Top Questions Parents Ask](#), by Susan Ashley

For more information

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#): (800) CDC-INFO
- [CHADD National Resource Center](#): (800) 233-4050
- [Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\)](#): (800) 233-4050
- [National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities](#): (800) 695-0285
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"There is no substitute for books in the life of a child." — May Ellen Chase