

**10 RESOLUTIONS FOR PARENTS
TO HELP YOU RAISE CHILDREN WHO LOVE BOOKS AND READING.**

1. READ ALOUD TO YOUR CHILDREN EVERY DAY.

The more models of fluent reading the children hear, the better. Reading to children also increases their knowledge of the world, their vocabulary, their familiarity with written language and their interest in reading. Many families enjoy a 20-30 minute read-aloud just before bedtime. Start reading aloud to your children on a daily basis when they are babies and keep reading to them up through elementary school and later. As they get to be independent readers, continue to read aloud to your children but also give them time to read to you. For information on the how, why and what of reading aloud, I recommend “The Read-Aloud Handbook” by Jim Trelease

2. GET A LIBRARY CARD

Public libraries are wonderful, and it is easy to get a card. In most cases, all you need is identification verifying that you live in the area served by the library. If your children are old enough, they need to get their own cards and learn to keep track of their borrowed books so as to get them back on time. Once you have a card, ask the librarian to show you and your children around the children’s section and show you how to use the card catalog (generally computerized). If your children have special interest (favourite subjects, authors, etc.) make sure they ask the librarian how to locate books related to them.

3. TAKE YOUR CHILDREN TO THE LIBRARY ONCE A WEEK

Get in the habit of visiting the library each week to borrow books. Give each child an inexpensive tote bag for their library books; they can not only use it to carry their books to and from the library; they can also store the books in it when they are not reading them. Spend enough time at the library so your children don’t feel rushed. Encourage them to look around. Help them find the books they want. Ask the librarian for suggestions if you need help. Be sure and sign your children up for the library’s summer reading program.

4. DISCUSS CHILDREN’S BOOKS WITH YOUR CHILDREN

Talk about the books your children are reading in school and the ones you have read to them. Relate happenings in your family to stories they have read/heard. Take your children to selected movie versions of children’s books. Some movie versions of children’s books are terrible, so be sure and read the review first. Compare and contrast movie and book versions of the same story.

5. TAKE YOUR CHILDREN TO STORYTIMES, AUTHOR VISITS, AND OTHER PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public libraries often present story times, magic shows, craft activities, and author programs for children, from babies to teenagers. Check and see if your library has a calendar of programs available. Your local literacy group often presents Mother Goose programs, Family Nights Out and book clubs for older children. Check them out.

6. BUY BOOKS THAT YOU KNOW WILL INTEREST YOUR CHILD.

A chapter book from a favourite series, a reference book on a subject of interest, a good quality hardbound version of a favourite book – all of these make great gifts. The trick is to know your children’s interests and which books they have, and have not, already read.

7. CREATE A COMFORTABLE READING SPACE FOR YOUR CHILD

Make sure there is some place in your home where your child can read without being distracted by the TV or other family members. Good lighting is important, as is comfortable seating.

8. VISIT THE WEBSITES OF FAVOURITE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS

Many authors have websites with information about all of their books, a brief biography, and activities for children. Some are exceptional. For example, picture book author and illustrator Jan Brett has several

thousand activities for children on her website. If your children are interested in being writers or illustrators, they will particularly enjoy reading about how others got their start. Some publishers also have exciting sites, such as Scholastic's Harry Potter site.

9. ONCE A WEEK, COOK TOGETHER USING A CHILDREN'S COOKBOOK

There are some excellent children's cookbooks available and it can be a lot of fun to cook together, whether you are preparing a meal or a snack. Reading and following directions is good practice for your children, and cooking is a skill they will use throughout their lives.

10. BUY YOUR CHILDREN A GOOD DICTIONARY AND USE IT REGULARLY

Anytime your children ask what a word means send them for the dictionary. Once the word is looked up, discuss it. This is a great way to build your children's vocabulary and pique their interest in words.

For more information about literacy, books and Family Literacy Programs in the Boundary, please contact Lizanne Eastwood – Family Literacy Coordinator, Grand Forks and the West Boundary, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy. 442-2533 or leastwood@thehub.literacy.bc.ca