**27 Tips to on Growing a Childs Reading Habit**

1. When you cuddle your child with a book, use your finger sometimesto follow the flow of the words. This helps the child understand how a book works – e.g. left to right with a return to left at the end of a line, e.g. the print runs from the top to the bottom on the page.

2. When you read with your child they come to understand that printed words carry meaning and messages. Text means something and there is a reason to read.

3. Children can learn a word by its shape before they may recognise individual letters. As an example think about brand names they see on the television - e.g. Lego, Coca Cola, Tayto, Vanish

4. When the child’s finger follows yours across the page, they are learning to track voice or sound with print.

5. Alphabet books are important. Use them to help children become familiar with and be able to recognise all the letters of the alphabet. They also help them recognise simple words by shape – dog, cat etc.

6. Books are treasures. Have a dedicated bookshelf or special place for their books in the room or in the house. If possible create a Reading Corner where you share books together – in the sitting room, or living room.

7. Make a quiet time to read to your child every day. Be patient and positive. Encourage them to talk about the story and link it to their lives. You are helping to develop their memory and their concentration.

8. Present reading as something useful e.g. how to care for the family dog, a book about a walk, flowers you see as you go etc.

9. Reading is fun and for pleasure. Don’t associate it with school or lessons or punishment.

10. Moderation in all things. Mix reading time with children’s television and screen time – neither should happen at the expense of reading.

11. Nursery rhymes and songs are a very important and a fun way to help your child learn new words and to use them confidently. As they learn the song or its pattern, they start to predict words and to learn how to use them elsewhere.

12. The more children are read to, the better they will read in time. Children’s successes in school at ages 9 and 10 can be linked to the amount of talk they hear from birth through ages 3-5. Conversation operates with limited vocabulary – reading books introduces many more words.

13. By age 3, trends for a child in the amount of talk, vocabulary growth, and style of interaction are well established.

14. Children begin collecting words and growing vocabulary at 16 – 18 months.

15. Reading grows vocabulary, concentration, conversation, visual awareness of colour and pictures, curiosity, empathy, understanding of their world.

16. Choose books that share your interests with your child – football, fashion, …. Strengthen the bond between parent and child.

17. Encourage children to draw pictures about the stories you read to them and encourage them to make up their own stories.

18. The home is the most important learning place your child will ever have. Parents are the most important influences on a child’s development. Parents naturally teach children about speaking, listening, reading, writing, numbers and letters in everyday family tasks in and around the home. The earlier a parent starts reading with and to their child, the greater the impact it will have on their child’s development & the longer it will last.

19. Children thrive in homes where books and reading are viewed as the best reward. Never deny a child their book as a punishment.

20. Borrow loads of books and make sure your child has plenty of choice.

21. Pick some small books that will fit in your bag. Bring them everywhere with you. Read them together while you wait.

22. Help your child choose their own reading materials.

23. Repetition & familiarity are good! Read, re-read and read again that favourite story.

24. Encourage your child to talk about the books you read, all the time - outside the story time.

25. When selecting books with your child, pick something you both will enjoy. For children under 4 years of age, consider books with easy to follow sequences, repetitive words or phrases, stories that are predictable & action packed, stories that have a clear message or moral.

26. The child who reads for 15 minutes a day reads more than 1.1 million words in a year.

27. To help parents expand the range of their story time at home, look at and discuss the ‘CROWD’ technique