

Consistency in Reading to Your Children

by Terry Doherty, Executive Director of the Reading Tub

Consistency is Important

The biggest mistake we as parents can make is not being consistent in our support of reading. If you want your child to be kind, you have to model kindness every day. Good nutrition starts with the same approach. Tiger Woods became an exceptional golfer because together he and his dad made it a priority in their relationship. They golfed every day. We can do the same thing with reading. If we layer one positive experience on top of another, we are building a strong foundation for life. Especially when a child is very young, it is the sound of your voice, not the words, that they love.

We have certainly learned much more about teaching reading. The level of literacy required is what has changed in our world to an even greater extent and so, to take advantage of the goods of our current society, an advanced level of literacy is a must. Without it you are relegated to a level of income and opportunity that isn't fair. If we know that to become successful you have to be literate in our society, then it is incumbent upon us to do a better job of helping children at these beginning stages and throughout [their development].

Helping our children develop these life-critical skills begins with conversations and a commitment to read aloud every day. And that commitment doesn't end when they begin school and learn to read. It is imperative that we encourage older children to continue to read. As parents, we must stay attuned to the things that interest them and work hard to help them find reading material that match those interests. Bottom line: we must be strong reading role models who provide both guidance and adequate opportunities and engaging materials.

You can visit the Reading Tub® (<http://www.thereadingtub.com>) to help find great books to share with your child. The website offers book reviews for children from infant to young adult. All of the profiles include a target audience review so that it is easy to see what kids just like yours think of a book. On other parts of the website, you can meet authors in the Author Showcase, read articles full of ideas, follow links to other reading resources, and subscribe to our blog. The U.S. Department of Education also has important guidelines available for free at <http://www.ed.gov/parents/read/resources/edpicks.jhtml>