



Royal Society for Blind Children

Reading with your toddler

Reading is a great way to spend time together. Your child's Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment will be able to advise you on the best way for your child to access the written word. This may be braille or a larger font size. No matter what your child's vision, reading is an important activity, and there are lots of ways you can enjoy reading at home.

Reading together:

Where possible try to make reading part of everyday life. You don't need to stick to just reading books, you can read recipes together (and make tasty treats after) or read a shopping list (and buy something rewarding off the list). It can be useful to talk about when you are reading and writing too (reading the instructions, reading the sign, writing the message) so that your toddler begins to understand that reading is purposeful.

When it comes to reading books and stories you can:

- Set up a sensory bag relating to the story or match pictures in the book to real life objects.
- If your child has some vision talk about the pictures and what they can see.
- Ask questions about the story and the characters.
- Talk about how their life relates to the story.
- Act out activities in the book.
- Encourage your toddler to help turn the page.
- Use your tone of voice to convey the story.

Games to help reading:

You can also play games together that help your toddler learn to read. These include:

- Practice mark making with scented pens or bright coloured pencils.
- Talk about letters and sounds.
- Make labels for your home – talk to your QTVI about how to make this accessible for your child.
- Make up your own stories together.
- Put their name on their bedroom door – make it tactile!
- Sing rhyming and alphabet songs.
- Make tactile books – find out more from [FamilyConnect](#)

Choosing books for your toddler:

Your QTVI can recommend specific font sizes or whether braille will be needed for your toddler in the future, but here are a few general considerations when it comes to choosing a book for your toddler:

- Books should have a large black font on a plain background.
- Look for books with clear, bold pictures that are not too complex.
- Consider a pop out book so the pictures can be felt.
- Tactile books with lots of textures are great for getting your toddler involved.
- Look for books with rhyme and repetition so that they can start to fill in the next word.
- Choose noisy books to help your toddler engage with the story.
- Look for a book that relates to them in some way, for example, a story about a cat if you have a cat.
- Consider a book that has braille in it too, so that they can start to follow the Braille as you read aloud.
- Contact your local library service to find out about books they have available in accessible formats for you to borrow.

Booktrust also have a series of guides that can help you with choosing reading and choosing books:

- [A guide to reading with your blind or partially sighted child](#)
- [Books for blind and partially sighted babies and toddlers](#)
- [books with characters that are blind or partially sighted](#)

Our Families First team of family practitioners are here to support you through your child's early years and into the future.

RSBC can help you with:

- practical advice about your child's development
- support when you feel overwhelmed.
- understanding your child's vision impairment better
- living as a family and being supportive of each other

Call 020 3198 0225 or email connections@rsbc.org.uk

