



Resource 5

Let's Use the Library!

Most public libraries offer a wide variety of children's books and magazines in English as well as other languages. In addition to printed materials, libraries often lend audiotapes and videocassettes of books and movies, and more libraries are making computers available to the public. Many libraries also sponsor special programs, including children's story hours, summer reading programs and homework help. If your child has special needs, be sure to ask about services the library offers for the blind, the deaf and those who are gifted or need remedial help. Many libraries have specially trained librarians for children. Feel free to ask them for help.

Here are some things you can do to introduce your child to the library.

- Include children, even toddlers, in trips to the library, and go often.
- As soon as you can, help your child get a library card.
- Borrow recordings of children's stories and songs, cassette tapes, compact discs, videotapes, even puppets and educational toys.
- Find out if your library has computers and how your children can use them to learn or upgrade skills.
- Encourage your children to use the library to find information for their homework.
- Encourage your children to ask for help from you and the librarian in finding books and materials.
- Work with the librarian to teach older children how to find things in the library on their own.
- Teach your children how to take care of themselves in public places, especially if they use the library alone.
- Stress common sense guidelines for behavior in the library.

Become Members of Your Local Library

- Sign up for a library card yourself, and check out books to learn stories, songs, rhymes and fingerplays to use at home to stimulate and encourage your child's development.
- Get a library card for your child as soon as possible. (Some libraries will issue a card as soon as a child can write his or her name.)
- Encourage your child to check out books. This can encourage responsibility.
- Take your child to the library for special programs.

Reference Desk

- Encourage your children to use the library for schoolwork. Help them determine if the library has the resources they need or if they need to check other information sources.
- Give your children encouragement, advice and a ride if they need it, but resist the temptation to take over an assignment. Let your children be responsible for researching and writing reports.
- Check out the special services your library offers for helping students with school assignments, such as homework hotlines and term paper clinics.

Source: US Dept. of Education
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/LearnPtnrs/library.html>