

# BE A READING Role Model

If you want your child to be a good reader,  
be one yourself!

By Jessica Tom

You probably encourage your child to read. But do you practice what you preach? Children of readers are more likely to become readers, so set the right example.

## **Surround yourself with reading material.**

Books don't belong only in libraries and classrooms. Make the written word a part of your living space. Keep books, magazines, and newspapers readily available throughout your home. Bookmark favorite online newspapers and magazines.

**Draw attention to all the things you read.** Provide sources for the things you talk about. For example, if you discuss topics like health, climate, or politics, tell your child which books and websites helped you learn about these topics. You'll show him how knowledge is shaped by what we read. You'll also show him how reading connects us to the real world.

**Buy or borrow books together.** When you go to the library or bookstore, invite your child to come along. Even if you aren't looking for anything in particular, practice the art of book browsing. Make an event out of it.

**Don't be a solo reader.** Open up conversations through reading. Pause to read an interesting fact aloud. Or, wonder what an unfamiliar word means. Do you belong to a book group, or enjoy discussing books online? Share these activities with your child. Knowing that the reading experience is not always a solitary activity will motivate reluctant readers.

**Read for leisure.** Show that reading isn't work. Cuddle up with a good book. You'll model how reading can be a really enjoyable part of your day.



## **Bring something to read everywhere you go.**

From the office to home, or even the living room to the bedroom, make sure you're equipped with reading material—for yourself and your child. You never know when you'll have some downtime. Show her that reading is a constructive (and fun!) way to pass the time.

## **Emphasize the universal importance of reading.**

Librarians, teachers, students, mechanics, lawyers, doctors, architects, athletes . . . everyone reads. Show your child that reading is part of everyone's life. Read diverse works that serve different purposes. Consider cookbooks, television guides, online magazines, and cereal boxes. Make a habit out of living through reading.