

Reading for Fun and the Future

Local Literacy Activities for Families to Enjoy Together

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Learning begins before a child sets foot in the classroom. In fact, research shows children start learning at birth and 90 percent of their brains develop in their first five years. As children's first teachers, parents play an important role in helping children learn. One of the best ways parents and caregivers can do this is through reading. Studies show children in families that read together are more likely to develop skills needed to succeed in school. Plus, reading is a great way for families to spend quality time together.

For National Literacy Month this September, First 5 Shasta and First 5 Tehama encourage families to enjoy the following resources that help them read together.

Shasta County: Early Literacy Resources and Activities

- **Raising a Reader Program.** Most area child care providers and preschools offer this rotational book lending program. Children get a red book bag with new books to take home each week to read with their parents. When they finish the program, they receive their own blue book bag to use at the library. To find a participating site, call 246-9622 x113.
- **Children's Libraries.** Children's books for check-out and free weekly story times. For information, call Redding Library 245-7253, Cottonwood Library 347-4818, or Anderson Library 365-7685.
- **Read to Me Book Club.** The Shasta Family YMCA hosts a weekly story time and book bag exchange for parents and children ages 2 to 5 from September 11 through December 11. Cost is \$10 for YMCA members and \$20 for non-members. Call 246-9622 for more details.
- **A Day of Literacy and Play.** KIXE's "Ready to Learn" event held at the Redding Library on October 31 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Features storytelling, book giveaways, crafts activities and healthy snacks. For more information, call 243-5493.
- **Read for the Record.** Help set the world record and raise early literacy awareness on October 8. Parents, caregivers, teachers and older siblings around the world will read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to children. Families can participate at home by pledging to read at www.readfortherecord.org.

Tehama County: Early Literacy Resources and Activities

- **Promoting Language and Literacy Parent Workshop.** This workshop for families and educators will be presented in English and Spanish. Participants will receive a free children's book and take-home activities. Child care and snacks provided. September 17, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at First Steps Family Resource

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Center in Los Molinos and September 9, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Corning Family Resource Center. Call 384-7833 for more information.

- **Language and Early Literacy Development in Infants and Toddlers.** Training in both English and Spanish with snacks provided. September 30, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Tehama County Department of Education. RSVP with CCRE at 529-3131.
- **Bilingual Story Hour.** Story time for parents and children 0 to 5 years old on September 10, 10 to 11 a.m. at the Corning Family Resource center.
- **Raising a Reader Program.** New Directions to Hope and the Shasta YMCA also organize this free book loan program. For more information, call 529-0592 or stop by CCRE located at 590 Antelope Blvd., building B, in Red Bluff.

Reading Year Round

The fun and rewards of reading go beyond September. The following tips can help you further prepare your child for school success by making reading part of daily activities.

- **Start reading early.** Begin reading simple books to your infant. Even if your baby can't talk about the story, he or she is still learning. Hearing your voice and being close during reading helps your baby build a meaningful bond with you.
- **Have fun choosing books.** Talk with your toddler and preschooler about what kind of stories he or she likes. By helping your child explore interests through books, you're encouraging healthy learning.
- **Repeat to boost new words.** Toddlers love to hear favorite stories again – and repetition helps them learn new words each time.
- **Take learning off the page.** Ask your child about stories you read together. These conversations can teach your child to analyze and form opinions, which stimulate learning.

For additional tips or information about First 5 programs funded in Shasta and Tehama County, contact your local commission:

First 5 Shasta, (530) 229-8300, www.first5shasta.org

First 5 Tehama, (530) 528-1395, www.first5tehama.com

About First 5 Shasta

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. To date, First 5 Shasta has invested approximately \$12 million in Prop. 10 revenues in programs and services that meet local needs.

About First 5 Tehama

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Tehama distributes approximately \$841,000 a year in Prop. 10 revenues to programs and services that meet local needs.

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