



**Tip-sheet for
parents of babies
(birth to 18 months)**

Babies love and need books

Reading and talking about what you are reading is very important for your baby. It's also a special time when you can both enjoy being together as you read aloud and turn the pages. As you do this, you are helping your baby to learn words and to understand what they mean. And you're showing your baby that books and reading are fun. Singing, saying and reading nursery rhymes are also very important. Remember, it's never too early to develop an interest in and love of reading.

Time for snuggling up and enjoying that special book with your baby

Snuggling up together will help your baby feel cosy and safe as he/she hears you read with a gentle, soothing voice. In the early days, your baby will simply enjoy listening to you reading and won't need to see the pictures.

As your baby gets older and can focus on a book, choose books with bright colours like red and yellow and with high-contrast colours like black and white. Babies also love books with pictures of real faces, especially those of other babies. These types of books are easier for young babies to see and will grab their attention.

Once babies can sit up and can handle books themselves, they like 'lift-the-flap' books and enjoy the surprise when something is revealed. They will know what is behind the flap after a few readings.

When introducing books to your baby, describe the pictures and explain what is happening in the story as some early picture books have very few words! Sometimes, it takes a few readings before your baby can follow the story so regular reading of books is important. As you read, smile and respond to your baby's coos and gurgles. Make sure your baby can take part in the reading too, for example, pointing to things or helping to turn the pages.

Playing with books

Babies also love to play with and explore books so have some books that are easy to reach, hold, look at, and even chew. Books made of cloth or soft plastic (for the bathtub) or board books with sturdy cardboard pages are great for babies to handle by themselves.

**Above all, enjoy
reading together!**

Reading at bedtime

It's a good idea to start reading as part of the bedtime routine. Once your baby has been fed, bathed and is ready to settle down, he/she will be less interested in handling the book and more likely to listen to you reading a story in a nice gentle voice.



Dr Mary Roche (St. Patrick's College, Thurles) has made a list of some books that your baby might enjoy. There are many other books available so have a look in the baby section of your local library.

Take a look at the list of books for toddlers on the Aistear Toolkit on www.ncca.ie/aisteartoolkit as older babies might enjoy these too.

Suggested list of books to read with babies

- **All of baby – nose to toes** (2011) by Victoria Adler
- **Baby faces** (1998) by Margaret Miller
- **Baby happy baby sad** (2008) by Leslie Patricelli
- **Baby loves spring** (2012) by Karen Katz
- **Big little** (2003) by Leslie Patricelli
- **Black on white** (1993) by Tana Hoban
- **Busy books series** (2012) by Rebecca Finn
- **Clap hands** (1999) by Helen Oxenbury
- **Everywhere babies** (2004) by Susan Meyers
- **Goodnight moon** (2007) by Margaret Wise Brown
- **Heads, shoulders, knees and toes** (2002) by Annie Kubler
- **How a baby grows** (1998) by Nola Buck
- **How does baby feel?** (2011) by Karen Katz
- **Large print nursery rhymes** (1999)
- **Love you forever** (1995) by Robert Munsch
- **Maisy's first flap book** (2001) by Lucy Cousins
- **Moo, baa, la la la!** (1982) by Sandra Boynton
- **Moo moo: can you say it too?** (2014) by Sebastian Braun
- **More, more, more sand said the baby** (1990) by Vera B. Williams
- **My first book of things to see** (2013) (My First Book Series)
- **Noisy peekaboo series** (2010)
- **Orange pear apple bear** (2009) by Emily Gravett
- **Pat-a-cake** (2010) by Annie Kubler
- **Peek-a-who** (2000) by Nina Laden
- **Peepo** (2011) by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
- **Quiet loud** (2003) by Leslie Patricelli
- **Sleepy baby** (2006) by Fiona Watt
- **Slide and find colours/animals/words** (2008) by Roger Priddy
- **Ten little fingers and ten little toes** (2008) by Mem Fox
- **The baby's lap book** (1990) by Kay Choro
- **The book of baths** (1997) by Karen Grey Ruelle
- **The puffin baby and toddler treasury** (2000)
- **The wheels on the bus** (2001) by Annie Kubler
- **This is me dressing up!** (2014) by Neal Layton
- **Tickle tickle** (1999) by Helen Oxenbury
- **Where is baby's bellybutton?** (2000) by Karen Katz
- **Where is Spot?** (2003) Eric Hill
- **Where is the green sheep?** (2009) by Mem Fox
- **Wilbur's book of colours** (2013) by Valerie Thomas
- **Yummy yucky** (2003) Leslie Patricelli