



Becoming A Storyteller

We are all storytellers. We tell stories on the phone, when we talk about our children and families, when we describe the play of an outstanding athlete, when we tell our family about what happened at work, etc. Stories are a natural part of the day. Children learn more than you might think from those stories. Sharing stories with children helps them develop language and literacy skills, and can give them a chance to spend special time with you.

Here are some storytelling ideas that you might try:

- 1 Tell stories about what your life was like when you were your child's age.** What toys did you play with? Where did you live and what did it look like? What were your friends like? What kind of music did you listen to? What kind of clothes did you wear? If you are a grandparent, tell a story about your grandchild's parent when they were the child's age.
- 2 Review the events of the day.** Share stories about who you saw, what you did, where you went, how you felt, etc. Children are always interested in what their parents do, even if it doesn't seem special to you.
- 3 Create a family scrapbook.** Tell stories about each person or memento in the scrapbook.
- 4 Re-tell a story you already know,** like a fairy tale or a classic children's story.
- 5 Find an interesting picture.** Make up a story about how the picture came to be or what happened to the people (or animals or place) in the picture.
- 6 Read picture books** (books without words) with your child.
- 7 Make up stories** featuring your child and/or your child's favorite stuffed animals or friends.

Find ways to let children participate in the storytelling:

- Ask your child to review their day.
- Involve children in a story by having them act out parts, add sound effects, use props, finish your sentences, predict what will happen next, etc.
- Tell the first half of a story and let your child make up the ending or vice versa.
- After viewing a TV program or movie, make up a story together about what happens to the characters the next day.

Sometimes storytelling can be spontaneous and sometimes it works well to schedule special storytelling time (e.g., in the car on the way to school, at the dinner table, at bedtime, while waiting for appointments, etc.).

When might storytelling fit into your routine? _____

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To learn more, watch **A Place of Our Own** on California public television stations and visit the website at www.aplaceofourown.org.



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