

Fun with Family Stories

Why is it important to tell family stories?

- It provides a time to talk to your children and nurture their literacy development.
- It is an opportunity to hand down family stories, which are the basis of some of our most powerful memories and experiences.
- It enhances oral language development which is an important part of literacy development. Studies of early readers show they come from homes where oral language is used in a variety of ways.



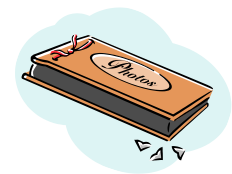
- It helps children become avid listeners as they love to hear stories about their parents' and grandparents' childhood experiences. Children also like to hear about themselves—such as telling them about the day they were born or adopted.
- It is a great way to keep a family's heritage alive and an opportunity to convey family values.
- And it helps children know who they are and make sense of their life by knowing their family history.

How early can you start? It's never too early!

Photo albums

You can start sharing stories with children when they are babies. Baby photo albums made of durable vinyl work great as story prompts – babies can turn the vinyl pages, chew on them, and look at them over and over while family members talk about the people in the pictures—and they wipe clean!

You can also make your own with poster board, pictures or color copies, and Ziploc bags.



Scrapbooking is really popular and a great family activity that also builds literacy skills. Include your child in as many of the baby book and scrapbook activities as possible and let your child start a family scrapbook of his/her own. It's also nice if you can include the child's artwork and early writing in these albums or scrapbooks.



Idaho Family Reading Week November 11-17, 2012

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What can you do as children get older?



As children get older they might enjoy tape recording family members telling family stories—where they lived as children, what their school was like, and holiday memories are ideas to start with.

Children might like to venture into genealogy by creating their own family tree. Public libraries have lots of resources to get people started. Through the Internet, they might be able to email distant relatives. Genealogy also opens up history, geography and other learning opportunities for the family. A family journal is another way of passing down family stories. Read stories about other families. This helps show that all families are the same in some ways and different in some ways.



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