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**Subject:** NR: DEVELOPING READERS FOR LIFE  
**Date:** January 26, 2011 9:03:35 AM

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INFORMATION BULLETIN  
2011EDUC0004-000065  
Jan. 26, 2011  
Ministry of Education

#### DEVELOPING READERS FOR LIFE

VICTORIA - Developing literacy skills begins at home. Whether it's a book, board game, magazine, newspaper or website, all British Columbians are being encouraged to take part in a literacy activity with their families for 15 minutes at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 27 to celebrate Family Literacy Day.

Today and throughout this week, events celebrating literacy are taking place in schools, libraries and community centres to mark this important day and to encourage families to read.

Ages and Stages - Whether your child is a bookworm or a reluctant reader, there are things parents can do to help develop their children's love of reading for life.

#### Ages 3-5

- \* Introduce books into your day-to-day activities. Have a reading picnic, play dress-up and act out a book, or read your recipe out loud as you bake with your child.
- \* Encourage repetition. There will be favourite books your child will want to look at over and over again. Being familiar with words and letters helps children learn.
- \* Make visits to your local library part of your weekly routine. Children feel grown-up signing out their "own" books and taking responsibility for returning them on time.

#### Ages 6-9

- \* At this stage, children develop skills rapidly in all areas. Reading is for fun and for learning - find books that encourage both and children will be motivated to keep reading on their own.
- \* Your child may be a beginning reader, or well into chapter books. Whatever their level, keep reading together and try materials that are slightly challenging but not frustrating to build vocabulary and encourage discussions that stimulate critical thinking skills.
- \* Play games that require numeracy, literacy, problem-solving skills and creativity - dust off classics such as cards, Scrabble or other board games. Make game night a weekly routine and soon everyone will want to

join in on the fun.

#### Ages 10-13

\* At this stage, children become more curious about what's going on in the world. Make paper-edition or online newspapers available - share stories, read letters or editorials, discuss events happening locally or

globally, do puzzles, read comics, check entertainment listings or follow sport stats.

\* Continue reading for pleasure. Select books from a variety of genres such as mystery, sports, science fiction or discover a new author or series. Find local authors, attend author readings or book signings, or find stories from favourite places you've visited.

\* Parents can continue to model positive reading habits by flipping off the TV and flipping open a book, or an e-book. Make reading as much a priority in your life as exercise, sleep, and healthy eating.

#### Ages 14 and older

\* At this stage, children are increasingly independent. Encourage them to walk or bus to the local library - they can find the latest titles in

books, magazines, video games and movies or can participate in online book clubs or earn community service hours for graduation through volunteer programs.

\* Share titles with your teen by asking them what they're reading. You may discover some new authors and books and boost their confidence by listening to their ideas and suggestions.

\* Keep talking with your teen by learning together. Ask your teen to show you how to use the latest electronic gadget, and they may be more willing to learn from you about how to safely search and find credible sources of information online.

Other tips and activities that ABC Life Literacy Canada recommends:

\* Travel the World: Well, sort of: use your library card as your passport. Check out books on different countries to learn about their traditions and celebrations.

\* Get the news: Read news articles and magazines and then discuss current affairs together.

\* Write your own adventure: Write a short story as a family with alternative endings written by each family member.

To find a Family Literacy Day event in your area, visit:

<http://abclifeliteracy.ca/en/flld/events/?p=British+Columbia>

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