

Studies suggest older kids play a role in encouraging reading

Lots of factors have an impact on your child's love of reading, but one of them may be closer to home than you realize. It's an older sibling! Recent studies show that children who see their older brother or sister reading for pleasure are more likely to seek out books themselves.

It's not just that book-loving older kids model good reading habits. They're also great resources when it comes to sharing books, suggesting new stories to explore and talking about literature.

To help your little bookworm reap the benefits of having an older sibling (or other older child) around:

- Make reading a family affair. Set aside some group reading time each week. Turn off the TV, snuggle up on the couch, and read together. Include older siblings, cousins or friends. It'll show your child how much reading matters in your home.
- Visit the library together. After your younger child chooses her books, let her look in the "big kid" section while her sibling finds a new book. No older sibling? Explore the preteen section with your child anyway. Let her see all the bigger kids browsing the shelves and reading in the aisles.
- Involve the babysitter. The next time your teenage sitter comes over, ask her to bring along a favorite book. If your child notices how important reading is to her, she may follow her lead and become interested in it, too!

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