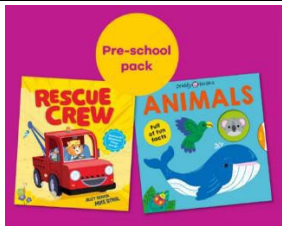


Early years practitioner guidance to support the BookTrust gifting scheme

This guidance aims to support our early years workforce in sharing the joy and skills for book sharing with children's families, giving children the Best Start in Life for early reading and writing, including ways for all children to enjoy and learn from books and stories being shared with them.

Please explore the links below to guide you through ideas and key messages, to support with gifting the Bookstart preschoolers' packs through book sharing, with children and their families.

		Do not just give it... Explore it! Before sending the pack home, create a special "Bookstart Moment" where children can discover the books together and start talking about the story. Share the story, spark curiosity, then send the book home. Children are much more likely to revisit a story they already know and love.			
Ideas for practice: • Rescue crew role play: Read ‘Rescue Crew’ together and set up a rescue station outdoors. Can children become firefighters, lifeboat crew, or animal rescuers before taking the book home? • Animal explorers: Use animals to inspire a mini animal hunt, matching game, or fact-finding adventure. Which animal would the children most like to meet? • Bring the story to life: Use props, small world play, puppets, vehicles, dressing up clothes or animal figures to deepen children's engagement with the books. • Building reading memories: A shared story experience in the setting helps children connect books with fun, enjoyment and belonging before continuing the experience at home.		Ideas for sharing with families: • Model the magic: Show families that book sharing is not just reading the words. Wonder, predict, chat, point, laugh and explore together. • Invite families to a book launch event: Turn pack distribution into a celebration. Reveal the books during circle time with families and build excitement before children take them home. • Model story detectives: Encourage children to become detectives. What clues can they find on the cover? Who might the characters be? What could happen next? • Model that talk is the secret ingredient: Model to families that conversations around a book are just as valuable as reading the story itself. Every question, comment and prediction builds language.			

Aim for every child to have at least one meaningful shared book experience with their new Bookstart books before the pack goes home.

Resources, support and training opportunities

Organisation/service	For practitioners	For children	For parents
	Supporting Early Years Professionals BookTrust. Partner resource guide BookTrust. Bookstart Toddler and Pre-Schooler/Nursery videos BookTrust.	The Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler programmes support early years professionals to encourage families to share books and stories together. Set up a 'Borrow Me' basket in your provision families can borrow books to take home and share together. Include a diverse range of books such as simple text, fiction/non-fiction, bilingual, interactive. 	Practitioner videos to strengthen your gifting process, including a model letter to parents and carers. Size: 119KB File format: pdf. Encourage parents to do a 'book swap' and donate books to the basket.
	Practitioners Working with the EYFS: 50 Things to Do. 50 Things to Do Before You're Five is based on such a simple idea; fun, low or no-cost experiences for the whole family, indoors and outdoors. It is a free bucket-list of fun stuff, involving an app, website, and physical resources. It provides childminders and early years group settings with the perfect resource for supporting your families.	Explore activity number 10 – Sharing Books. 	50 Things to Do Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.  Explore low or no-cost activities and events across Cambridgeshire, to share with families, to support them to develop their home learning environment.

	Children and young people in libraries Cambridgeshire County Council. Settings can make group visits to libraries, borrow books for your setting and request support with choosing books based on a topic or children's interests.	Children can join the library for free at any age – either join online or simply visit your local library.	First Steps Library Club, Rhyme time and Storytime sessions that could be shared with families.
	Talking Together in Cambridgeshire focuses on increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding within communities, of how best to support young children's communication, language and literacy development. A range of practitioner resources. Explore the latest communication, language, and literacy courses for early years practitioners.	A range of parent resources. How the Home Learning Environment helps children's development - Peeple.	
	Book sharing videos for caregivers and EY practitioners - PEDAL. As part of PEDAL's Playtime with Books project, they have created two videos for their YouTube channel that explain what book sharing is, how to do it, how it benefits children and what it might look like.	Book sharing videos for caregivers and EY practitioners - PEDAL A video for parents and caregivers to share with the families that you work with: How to make exploring books with your child fun! Advice for parents and caregivers - YouTube.	

Funded and free communication, language and literacy training

			
Early Talk Boost - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives. “Early Talk Boost is a targeted programme aimed at three-four-year-old children who need help with talking and understanding words. Most importantly, the programme helps to boost their language skills to narrow the gap between them and their peers. The programme aims to accelerate children’s progress in language and communication by an average of five months after nine weeks”. (ETB) Funded places and £150 bursary available: Communication, language, and literacy for training dates.	Early years providers can borrow a free WellComm toolkit from the Early Years, Childcare and School Readiness Service to support children's language and communication development. Suitable for children aged six months to six years, the toolkit includes assessment materials and targeted, colour-coded interventions to support progress. Most additional resources needed are commonly available within settings. The toolkit can be borrowed for 16 weeks, allowing time for assessment, intervention delivery and review. Further information about the toolkit can be found at WellComm - GL Assessment For queries, please contact Ali.Mitchell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.	An Introduction to Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) an evidence-based programme that supports children’s communication, language and early literacy development by helping families to strengthen positive home learning environments. Using the ORIM framework (Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction and Modelling), it empowers parents and practitioners to embed meaningful, everyday literacy experiences through fun, low-cost and accessible activities. Funded places and £150 bursary available: Introduction to Making it REAL.	Peep’s Learning Together Programme (LTP) fun and supportive evidence-based training, where you can learn more about supporting families, to recognise everyday moments that strengthen their child’s development, through play, helping to narrow the gap in educational attainment. The course will provide you with an overview of LTP’s five key strands, mapped to early years foundation stage areas of learning. You will receive access to resources for family-facing sessions that are linked to child development topics, including session plans, activity ideas, and parent handouts. The training will enable you to deliver Peep LTP to families with children in groups, one to one or embed within existing sessions that you already offer. Funded places and £300 bursary available: Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP).