

# Bring On the Books

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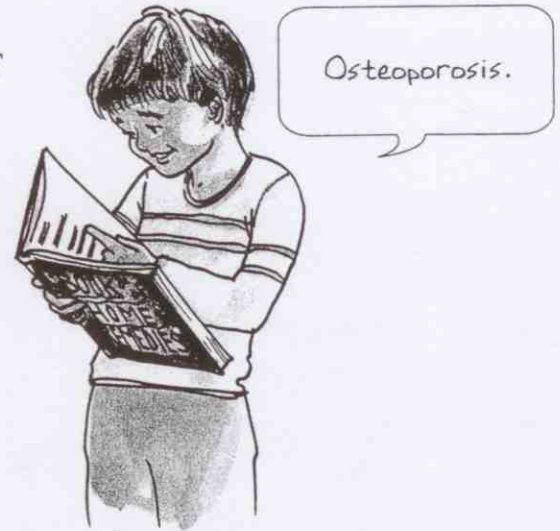
Some children can pour over a book for hours while others may only glance at the cover. However, all children who like to look at pictures or printed words tend to enjoy books. Unlike the spoken word, the pictures and print do not disappear after they're read. They remain on the page so that your child can make sense of what he is seeing *and* hearing. A good book can also be read many times over. Each time your child hears a story, he understands more and more as the book's language becomes familiar.

Some children with ASD have a precocious ability to read and are often more interested in looking at words than at pictures. Yet even though they can recognize long and difficult words, they don't always understand what these words mean.

In this chapter we will look at how books help your child understand his world and encourage him to communicate. We will also see how you can use the printed word to give your child information and a new way to express himself.

### When you read a book with your child, a lot of learning happens:

- Your child discovers the pleasure of sharing a book with you. Book reading offers you and your child the opportunity to make a connection and find enjoyment in two-way communication.
- Your child learns new words and sees words that he already knows used in a new context.
- Books encourage your child to think beyond the words written on the page, as you help him imagine how characters feel or what might happen next.
- Your child may discover another way to communicate through the printed word.



*Alexander loves to read words, but he doesn't always understand what they mean.*

## Reading Together

### Choose the Right Books

*(See the reference section for a short list of recommended books.)*

Take into consideration what your child does with a book, his understanding, his interests and the kinds of pictures that are meaningful for him. You may find that the best books have colourful pictures and text that relates directly to the picture under which it appears. Books for preschoolers usually have a couple of large pictures of familiar objects on each page, but your child may like more detailed pictures as well. Some children enjoy books with pictures of their special interests, such as animals or characters from favourite TV shows.

Remember that even books written for older children have wonderful illustrations. With a little reworking on your part, these books can be transformed into the right book for your child. (See "Read the Right Way" for guidelines on how to modify books for your child's stage.)

