

Engaging Dads and Mums

Evidence has shown that children's literacy levels improve substantially when their Dads gets involved with reading. Dads and other male carers are just as important as Mums in encouraging children to enjoy reading - perhaps even more so, since reading is often thought of by boys as a "girly" thing to do. Dads can be role models and seeing them enjoying reading will help children to realise that they do too - they might just need help in finding the right thing to read.

Parents can support children by...

- talking to them about the world around them
- encouraging them to chat and to listen to other points of view
- setting aside a specific time each day for shared reading (e.g. bedtime)
- singing songs they are familiar with
- taking them to the library
- reading with them and talking about the story and pictures
- discussing how their heroes might use reading
- showing them how reading can help them find out about their hobbies and interests
- playing word games
- involving them with your reading interests

The National Literacy Trust's Dads and Boys Galactic Reading Project was a study of the impact of involving male family members in a boys' reading project.

Below are the main findings relating to the impact that the project had on the boys and dads.

- The boys were positive about reading at the beginning of the project, but they felt even more positive at the end. The boys themselves stated that they now read more. The project had a positive impact on the boys' attitudes to reading and had helped them to develop as readers.
- The dads felt that their involvement had led to their boys enjoying reading more.
- It was not possible to show that there had been an increase in the attainment of the boys (beyond the anticipated level of progress) as a direct result of taking part in Galactic Reading Project.
- Most of the dads felt that their relationship with both the school and with their boys' education had improved. However, this change was greatest where the dad involved in the scheme was the principle male care giver for the boy.