

What babies and toddlers learn from sharing books with educators and parents/carers

- ❖ Books and reading are pleasurable.
- ❖ Pictures in books represent objects, actions and people in the real world.
- ❖ You need to pay attention to some parts of the picture more than others.
- ❖ All books have some things in common.
- ❖ Pictures can be talked about.
- ❖ Books relate to your own experiences.

How babies and toddlers interact with books

Sharing books with babies and toddlers is different from sharing books with older children. The following list provides a summary of early reading behaviours of babies and toddlers (adapted from Schickedanz & Collins, 2013, pp. 37–40).

Baby behaviours—Babies may do the following:

- ❖ look at pictures in books
- ❖ smile, vocalise and pat pictures
- ❖ grab, chew and suck board books
- ❖ crumple and tear pages in paper books
- ❖ attempt to turn pages.

Younger toddler behaviours—Younger toddlers may do the following:

- ❖ mostly be able to turn pages
- ❖ flip through pages in a book
- ❖ orient a book correctly, right way up

- ❖ understand some early words for familiar objects
- ❖ join in with familiar rhymes, songs and stories
- ❖ show preference for some books over others
- ❖ carry books around with them, asserting ownership (*mine*)
- ❖ point to pictures and ask for a name (*what's that?*)
- ❖ use language to label or describe pictures (*ball, apple, pussy cat*)
- ❖ make animal, engine and siren noises in response to pictures.

Older toddler behaviours—Older toddlers may do the following:

- ❖ play with language based on stories
- ❖ use more complex sentences
- ❖ ask and answer simple questions
- ❖ turn on and operate smartphones or tablets
- ❖ pretend to read to dolls and teddy bears
- ❖ make connections between book content and personal experiences.