

# Free Offer

## 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell



### Tip No 1

#### CHECK OUT YOUR CHILD'S HEARING AND SIGHT SKILLS



Make sure your child's hearing and sight are checked regularly. Undetected middle ear infections and other hearing losses can significantly affect your child's ability to learn the reading and spelling basics.

Don't assume if they can hear the *crackle of a chip packet at 50 paces*, that they have **adequate hearing for learning**.

In Australia, you can take your child to a Community Health Audiologist for a free hearing test and appropriate referrals if required.

If your child suffers from too many middle ear infections, your doctor can advise you about appropriate ways to treat their difficulty.

You should also have your child's vision checked by a qualified Optometrist who has experience with children. They need to have checks done on the clearness of vision, and also how the eye muscles work together to support learning. This includes how the eyes team together to focus on the blackboard and then to the page; and also how the eyes track along a line of text on the page.



Your child needs to have visual concentration and visual processing skills to help them with reading and spelling skills. An Optometrist can assess both clarity and eye muscle functioning.

## Tip No 2

### 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**DON'T ASSUME YOUR CHILD KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO READ OR SPELL.**

Check your child's skills out – does your child know that the letters we write with..... make the sounds we speak with?

It is *vital* that your child makes the link between the words on the page and the words we say.

Children don't pay any attention to words they say – they have a thought and out come the words.

Make sure they see you pointing to words when you read, to understand that writing on the page represents the words we speak.

Children also don't usually "think" in sentences – they "think" in thoughts. When they are trying to write a sentence, they have to 'formalise their language.



## Tip No 3

### 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**LISTEN TO THE CLARITY OF YOUR CHILD'S SPEECH**

How clear are the sounds you child speaks with?

If your child is experiencing difficulties with clear speech as a preschooler or young school-aged child, it is possible they will have difficulties picking up the tricks of reading and spelling.

Have your child assessed by a Speech Pathologist if you or others find your child's speech hard to understand.

Demonstrate to them the way we pronounce different words, and get in front of their face when you are saying the word, so they can **see** as well as **hear** the sounds in the word.



### Tip No 4

#### 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**UNDERSTAND THAT THE READING OR SPELLING TASK IS DIFFICULT FOR YOUR CHILD, SO ADJUST THE FEEDBACK YOU GIVE THEM.**

Understand that the reading or spelling task is difficult for your child so adjust the feedback you give them.

Telling your child to “*look harder*” does not help. Watch what your child is doing when they are having difficulty with a word. Do they start with the correct letter, but then make a jumble of sounds?

By understanding the task is difficult for your child, your expectation and levels of frustration should change.

Keep your feedback to your child positive. Give them advice they can use to improve.

Words like “try harder” do not give your child a clue how to improve what they are doing.

Comments like “the first sound is ‘b’, write it down for me” is much more supportive and helpful.



Try to avoid using words like:

“no... that’s not right”.....

“you can do better”.....

“you’re not trying”.

Instead, choose words like:

“I can see you are trying”.....

“you are sounding the words really well”

“make sure you check the first sound”.



# Tip No 5

## 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**CHECK YOUR CHILD KNOWS THE SOUNDS THAT MATCH EACH LETTER.**

It is vital that your child knows accurately what each letter is and what the correct sound (or sounds are) that match the letters.

Some children will try to sound out words by saying the names of the letters.

They will say:  
“see-ay-tee” for ‘cat’  
instead of /c-a-t/.



When you are first teaching your child what sounds match each letter shape, use visual, auditory and touch sensations.

Let your child **watch** your mouth, to **see** how your lips and tongue move when you **say** different sounds. Help them **watch** themselves in a mirror and **feel** their own mouth **move** to make the sounds and listen to the sound itself.

Link this with how each letter shape looks.

By saying the sounds in the word (rather than the names of each letter), your child will be able to hear the word in slow motion and this will help their spelling to improve.

Let your ears listen to your mouth do the talking.



**clever  
cat**

**educational  
resources**

## Tip No 6

### 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**READ TO YOUR CHILD AND LET THEM SEE YOU READING TO YOURSELF FOR PLEASURE OR WORK TOO.**



Everyone is told that it is important to read to your children from a young age, and it is usually easy to do this when your child is younger than school age.



What is harder to do as your children grow older, is to remember to continue to read to your child when they are school age.

This is especially true when parents are working and the pace of life increases dramatically.

It is important to continue your child's love of stories and books, even if they have difficulty with reading and spelling.



Many children tend to avoid books in favour of Playstations, X-box and Wii entertainment. By keeping their focus on stories, books and reading for pleasure, you can keep their motivation high for them to *want to read* and *want to accomplish spelling* skills.

By reading to your children throughout their primary schooling years, you can assist to develop knowledge, and also vocabulary development far beyond what they will hear in the playground.

Take your children to the library, and show them a variety of books. Fiction books that are written as part of a series are often really popular for boys and girls, as the children become comfortable with the setting and characters in the books.

Discuss the types of stories they enjoy to try a range of topics and writing styles. When you read the stories, discuss with your child if they want to listen to you read to them, or if they want to do some shared reading at times, either paragraph by paragraph, or page by page, or chapter by chapter. Doing this supports your children's reading skills and enables them to relax and enjoy the story, as well as for them to "keep up" and understand the story line.

If they were to read the book alone, they may not enjoy it as much as they may find the words too difficult, or the storyline hard to follow as they would be working too hard on decoding the words and not focussing on the story.

Let the children see you reading **for pleasure** too. Tuck up on the lounge with a good book, a blanket and a cool drink and enjoy your own reading. It might be a novel, the latest car magazine, or the newsletter from school. A magazine or a real estate book can be just as absorbing. Have a night a week for reading, no TV and family discussion. You will be amazed how your kids pick up on it.

## Tip No 7

### 7 Vital Tips You Must Use When Your Child Is Learning To Read and Spell

**IF YOU BECOME CONCERNED THAT YOUR CHILD IS FALLING BEHIND WITH READING AND SPELLING AT SCHOOL....DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.**

Speak to your child's teacher. Request a meeting time without your child present to sit with the teacher and go over your child's work.



Ask questions – can your child have special support?

- can your child be assessed at school / out of school to give you more strategies to help them?
- Is there funding available to support them
- Can the homework be adjusted to suit their level so they can learn from it and not be overwhelmed by it?
- Is it just your child experiencing difficulties, or are others in the class in the same situation?

Ask for specific strategies to help your child at home.

Speak to your child's GP or Paediatrician

Have a Speech Pathology assessment to determine your child's communication and literacy skills.

Continue to be an advocate for your child. Continue to monitor your child's abilities and seek out assistance.

Discuss your concerns with Katrina Walsh, Speech Pathologist for Children.

Go to: [www.katrinawalshspeechpathology.com.au](http://www.katrinawalshspeechpathology.com.au)

Or email Katrina at [austspeech@westnet.com.au](mailto:austspeech@westnet.com.au)

Katrina is more than happy to discuss your concerns about your child.



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