

# Dear parents,

We congratulate you on the birth of your child! With Bookstart, we would like to accompany you on your journey into the world of language. Children love being talked to, they love for you to tell them stories or being read to. This is why every newborn child in Switzerland receives a gift: the Bookstart-package.

## Discovering language and stories together

Reading children's illustrated books together has a positive influence on the relationship between parents and children. When you read to children, you offer them time, nearness and compassion. Children love these moments. Reading aloud furthers the imagination. Your child discovers the world playfully. Children who are being read to regularly have a bigger vocabulary and learn reading more easily.

## Growing up with books

The following indications give you a rough idea about the different stages of your child's mental growth, about its interests and faculties. Just remember: these indications are not universally valid. Every child is different.

### 6 months

Your newborn child grabs a book and bites it. Do not worry: your child is analysing the world. Can it eat the object in its tiny hands, what does it feel like, what is its shape? Does it make noises or does it have a special smell? At this stage, your baby can already distinguish strong colours.

### 12 months

Your baby has grown more discerning. It now knows that this object is a book and is happy that mom or dad look at the book and read to him. Your baby can recognize pictures. It might clap its hands when it remembers a picture. It starts to understand whether the images are the right way up or upside down.

### 18 months

The book has become a familiar object. The toddler carries it around, tries to turn the pages over and points at the pictures. It guesses how the pictures should be viewed, but it does not always hold the book properly. Your child wants you to read to it and will let you know that in its very own way.

### 24 Months

Your child turns one page at a time. It speaks the words to which the images relate. It ends sentences that you start. It repeats short excerpts of the story to which it has been listening. Your child is now becoming increasingly alert. It «reads» books to its dolls, stuffed animals or the cat and invents its own stories.

### 36 months

At this stage, your child can handle books well. When reading, it is attentive and notices every little deviation from the well-known story. The child «reads» the book himself and selects the pages that interest him or her the most.

### Later

Your child already has acquired the ability to observe. It can imagine things. It remembers what you have said and read. It often wants to repeat what it has just heard in its own words. There will be many questions that lead to discussions.

## Books in the everyday life of your family

Take your time to look at books with your child. Give your child the possibility to look at the pictures in its own time and cater to the interest of your child. Let it turn over pages by itself, be ready to answer questions, to have a conversation.

## Welcome to the library

The library of your hometown owns many books that are waiting to be discovered by you and your child. Many libraries stage events for the little ones. Songs will be sung, verses recited, stories told. You can participate and be inspired.

## Who is behind Bookstart?

Bookstart is conducted throughout Switzerland by Bibliomedia and the Swiss Institute for Children and Youth Media SIKJM.

[www.bibliomedia.ch](http://www.bibliomedia.ch)  
[www.sikjm.ch](http://www.sikjm.ch), [www.isjm.ch](http://www.isjm.ch), [www.ismr.ch](http://www.ismr.ch)

Further information at: [www.buchstart.ch](http://www.buchstart.ch),  
[www.nepourlire.ch](http://www.nepourlire.ch), [www.natiperleggere.ch](http://www.natiperleggere.ch)

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