



Reading together, changing children's lives

About BookTrust

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity with a history that stretches back over 100 years. Each year we get millions of children reading, especially those from low-income families or vulnerable backgrounds.

We operate in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and have long-term partnership agreements in place with every local authority in England and Wales. Our sister charity, Scottish Book Trust, supports families in Scotland.

We have a network of over

6,000 communitybased partners

which gives us access to all families in pockets of deprivation as well as those in the most disadvantaged urban and rural areas.

We work with 90%

of libraries, every state primary school and a quarter of all secondary schools. In 2022–23 we reached over

1.5 million children

Our core work supports children and families from low-income and vulnerable backgrounds, particularly in the early years. We also provide books and resources for every newborn baby through our Bookstart programme; we work with school children until the age of 13 and showcase the very best in children's literature.

Our research and evaluation capabilities are focused on understanding the life-changing benefits of reading and families' attitudes and behaviours. This work informs our design and innovation approach which shows how to create sustained reading behaviours in families.

We have expertise in commissioning books and resources and supply chain management, distributing millions of books and resources efficiently every year.

BookTrust provides support to the Waterstones Children's Laureate, which is entering into its 25th year.

We are one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations. Our headquarters are in Leeds and we have offices in London, Cardiff and Belfast as well as staff across the country.

Reading together, changing children's lives

This paper is the distillation of BookTrust's knowledge and understanding about how reading, and shared reading in particular, can transform outcomes for children. It shows what we think needs to be done to support families to become regular reading families and how some of the most cost-effective interventions can be scaled up based on existing networks and infrastructure. We are sharing these as our contribution to the national debate about how to lay the best foundations for a child's start in life. Please email us at chief.executive@booktrust.org.uk with your thoughts on these proposals.

What is shared reading?

Shared reading is when an adult or an older sibling looks at or reads a book with a baby or child. It is about enjoying a book or a story together and doesn't rely on the child's functional reading skills. It is most common with children under 7 or 8 – but can continue much later into childhood.

We live in challenging times for children.
Many more families are now living in poverty
due to the cost of living crisis¹. Children
who missed out on critical development
opportunities during the pandemic
have fallen behind in terms of language
development, literacy and communication

skills². Their social and emotional wellbeing has been affected³. There is a significant risk that their attainment at school and long-term life chances will suffer⁴.

BookTrust's work is designed to address some of the negative effects of poverty and the pandemic to help give children at most in need the best start in life. We know from decades of experience of working with tens of millions of children and thousands of local partners that reading can play a crucial role in helping to achieve good outcomes for children. It has a widely evidenced impact on both short-term and long-term outcomes, contributing significantly to better mental health, educational outcomes, empathy and creativity, and mitigating socio-economic inequalities. And it enriches family life!

Families know that reading is important but some struggle to make it part of family life with young children.

95% of families

know it's important to read with their child but only

42% of children

have a bedtime story.

BookTrust Family Survey 2022

Support for shared reading is low-cost, builds on existing social and educational expectations and on what families know is important. It also builds on the skills and existing networks of professionals and organisations working with children and families. This is fertile ground for making change happen.

This paper sets out what BookTrust thinks needs to happen and why, based on our research and experience. But we know hundreds of experts and professionals will have their insights to share and we want to hear these. The delivery of our programmes, as well as reading programmes run by other organisations, in communities across the country relies on widely distributed expertise. We want our ambitions for the future to be shaped by this expertise and are engaging in a dialogue with partners to capture their insights.

We would like to hear your views on our proposals for improving outcomes for disadvantaged children through the power of shared reading and how these fit with the work of your organisation. To share your thoughts, please contact us at

chief.executive@booktrust.org.uk



Our proposals

While we know that all children benefit from reading, we are committed to offering more targeted support to families from low-income and vulnerable backgrounds because we know these children stand to benefit the most from reading regularly and reading by choice.

We are calling for an expansion of provision in four key areas.

Proposal 1: Embedding reading in the life of every low-income family.

Providing high-quality books, resources and reading experiences for low-income families with children in the early years.

Proposal 2: Using shared reading to bring enjoyment and stability to vulnerable children. An intensive shared reading programme for children from vulnerable family backgrounds and support for their parents and carers.

Proposal 3: Helping antenatal and early years practitioners promote shared family reading. A programme of books, resources, inspiration, evidence-based guidance and training to make shared reading a part of family life from the earliest age.

Proposal 4: Supporting primary school teachers to foster a love of reading. Help to find high-quality books to share and resources to support home–school engagement with shared reading.

53% of parents and carers

of primary-age children say reading is not a big part of family life.

BookTrust Family Survey 2021

We believe, based on our experience and research, that if action was taken in these areas we would see a significant improvement in outcomes for children on both short-term and long-term measures. The sections below explain why each intervention matters and what we know will make a difference.

Why reading matters

Children who read regularly, and who choose to read, do much better on a wide range of outcomes than those who do not. We have reviewed hundreds of qualitative and quantitative studies to establish that children who read experience benefits in the following areas.

Children who read are more likely to overcome disadvantage caused by inequalities



They will experience better educational mobility and social mobility



Those growing up in poverty are less likely to remain in poverty as adults



They are more likely to overcome the barriers disadvantage presents throughout school

Disadvantaged children who achieve highly at the end of primary school are twice as likely to have been read to at home in their early years, compared to their peers⁵. Overall, fewer than half of disadvantaged children reached expected levels of attainment at the end of primary school, compared with nearly 70% of their better-off peers⁶.

Children who read are more likely to be happier, healthier and experience better mental wellbeing and self-esteem



They feel more secure and develop deep bonds with parents and carers



They have better sleep and lead healthier lifestyles



They have a better foundation for healthy social-emotional development



They have better mental wellbeing and self-esteem

Children aged 3–5 who are read to at bedtime sleep longer⁷. Sleep plays a crucial role in the development of children, impacting their growth, motor skills, attention, behavioural regulation, memory, mood and resilience⁸.

Children who read are more likely to do better at school and make more progress across the curriculum



They have better brain development, attention and cognitive ability



They have better language development and literacy skills



They have better knowledge about the world and are more ready for learning



They make more progress across the curriculum

Shared reading provides unparalleled opportunities for verbal interactions between a child and their parent or carer, contributing to early language development. This cannot be replicated by other activities such as playing with toys, mealtimes or arts and crafts⁹.

Children who read are more likely to develop empathy and creativity



They have more empathy

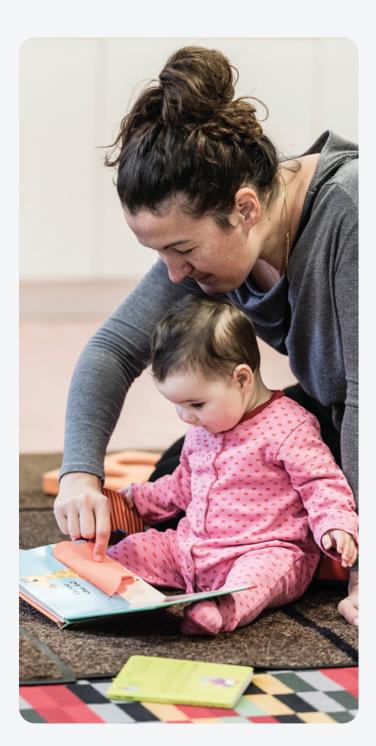


They are more creative and imaginative

By constantly formulating and reformulating their expectations of what might happen in a story, young readers practice mental flexibility, an openness to new situations and interpretations and problem-solving¹⁰.

These are just a few of the benefits of reading which have been established by research. The full body of evidence is substantial and varied. BookTrust has developed an interactive summary on the benefits of reading which summarises and systematises this research for anyone wishing to explore the evidence base for the impact of reading on child development.

What is special about shared reading?



While reading in general has an impact on outcomes, three important ingredients that are specific to shared reading stand out from our research. When adults share picture books with babies and children there are both immediate and long-term benefits:

- Physical closeness and shared attention: Sharing unhurried reading time is a perfect space for bonding and attachment. It shows the child that the adult is emotionally available. Sharing a point of interest with an adult teaches concentration, decoding and sensemaking¹¹.
- **Enjoyment:** Children are engaged in reading in the short and long-term when an adult varies their tone of voice; conveys delight, surprise and drama; and responds to the child's interest in the story. When a child sees an adult getting involved and enjoying a story, they enjoy it too¹².
- **Interaction:** Interactive reading helps relationships form and supports children's language and cognitive development, yielding benefits from as early as two weeks¹³. An adult reading in this way involves the child as much as possible, letting a child grab and touch a book; paying attention to the child's responses and reactions; and relating the content of the book to the child14. Children and adults say more words when they play with a book than with a toy15.

A summary of our proposals

Proposal 1: Embedding reading in the life of every lowincome family. Providing high-quality books, resources and reading experiences for low-income families with children in the early years.

Why this matters: In childhood, shared reading has immediate benefits. It supports bonding between children and their parents¹⁶, stimulates brain development¹⁷ and improves sleep⁷. It can improve parental mental health¹⁸. It also helps children reach early development goals and leads to longer term outcomes: evidence shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds who achieve highly at the end of primary school are twice as likely to have been read to at home in their early years¹⁹.

The challenge: Families know that reading is important but some struggle to make it part of family life with young children. 95% of families know it's important to read with their child but only 42% of children have a bedtime story. Many families struggle to find time to read with their child. A quarter of parents do not find reading with their children easy". Low-income families often do not have access to a range of enjoyable and age-appropriate books for their child.

BookTrust's solution: We have developed Bookstart Baby, Toddler (1–2 years) and Pre-schooler (3–4 years) to provide books and resources in ways that we know will motivate and support families on low incomes to read regularly. We reach half a million families with new babies each year and over 400,000

low-income families with toddlers. 98% of families find our resources exciting and enjoyable and 84% of low-income families say these resources prompted them to read more with their child^V – but our funding only allows us to reach fewer than 40% of eligible low-income families.

Our tested programmes should be available to all low-income children and families, both in areas of high poverty and in pockets of deprivation.

Over the past few years, we have seen a huge increase in the number of children joining our nursery who are non-verbal, and schemes like Bookstart really help to encourage parents to talk to their children at home and to realise what a huge effect reading to a child has on their language development.

Bookstart Toddler and Bookstart Pre-schooler Evaluation 2022–23 What works? We have carried out extensive research and designed our programmes with families on low incomes^{[,||,|||}. We know that to embed reading habits:

- Starting early makes a big difference. Families who start shared reading at the earliest opportunity are much more likely to continue reading through childhood. This is why Bookstart Baby is a vital strand of our approach and why we are piloting antenatal engagement.
- Book selection is critical. Families are more motivated to read books that feel relevant. Colourful and attractive designs and interactive books spark exploration, imagination and repeated use. Themes from everyday life and characters that are relatable draw families in. This is why we invest in our book selection expertise and work closely with publishers and authors to bring the most engaging books to families.
- Showing parents how to share stories builds confidence. When parents see children react positively to a story they are more likely to try it themselves. This is why we support libraries to deliver BookTrust Storytime where practitioners demonstrate how to read aloud, giving parents and carers the motivation to do the same at home.

When my child was a baby I hadn't really thought about what sorts of books to get as I thought he was too young to enjoy books, but when I received the **Bookstart Baby pack** I saw him responding to them even though he was so small ... I was suffering from postnatal depression and using this book was a good bonding activity with my baby and helped us connect a lot more. "

Bookstart Baby Evaluation 2021





- Connecting books to other activities and experiences supports engagement. Activities that extend the themes and ideas of a book provide more opportunities for engagement so families use a book over and over again. This is why our book packs for families include activity ideas and props for games based on the themes in the books.
- It has to be fun. When children and parents enjoy reading together they want to read together more often. This is why we work with the families themselves to design reading experiences that are playful and fun.

What is your experience of the role that books and reading can play in helping children from low-income families achieve their potential?

Proposal 2: Using shared reading to bring enjoyment and stability to vulnerable children. An intensive shared reading programme for children from vulnerable family backgrounds and support for their parents and carers.

Why this matters: Early shared reading matters for all children. When babies and children experience disruption or difficulties at home, shared reading can be especially transformative. Reading together supports attachment and can help children feel secure and loved²⁰. It provides escapism which acts as a protective factor against adversity; a sense of stability which helps children settle into new routines and environments: a mechanism for discussing difficult and charged issues; and a way of reconnecting with experiences and emotions²¹. Lookedafter-children and children-in-need have poorer educational outcomes on average than other children, including being less likely to meet age-related expectations in reading at ages seven and eleven²².

The challenge: Children from vulnerable family backgrounds or moving from one home to another face particular challenges in establishing regular shared reading. They may have limited access to engaging and appropriate books, complex and busy lives, and circumstances that make regular routines and rituals difficult.



The books that you choose are really high quality ... What I love about BookTrust is that you haven't assumed that everyone has a pencil at home ... That's BookTrust thinking outside the box and really understanding these families. ??

BookTrust Letterbox Club Evaluation 2021–23

BookTrust's solution: BookTrust supports thousands of children in long-term foster care each year with specially chosen books and resources which are delivered through our Letterbox Club programme. Because reading could make so much difference to many more vulnerable children, we are developing a new offer which will embed shared reading solutions for new family placements and as part of early intervention and early help, to support positive relationships and family life.

Our intensive shared-reading programmes should be available to thousands more children from vulnerable family backgrounds, providing evidence-based and sustained support so they can read regularly with their families.

What works? We have years of experience of delivering Letterbox Club through our network of partnerships with virtual schools, working with local authorities and schools to pilot approaches to supporting vulnerable children in different circumstances, and expertise in programme design with children and families. We know that:

- Embedding reading at the right moment is vital. There are opportunities to embed shared reading routines at moments of change and transition. Our support can be flexed to meet needs at key moments.
- Sensitive book selection is essential. Vulnerable children need books with age-appropriate and engaging content as well as books that support sensitive discussion of relationships and family life. This is why all our books are chosen by panels with expertise in child development and of the children's social care system.
- Ownership matters for children.
 Receiving and owning books makes children feel special and supports them to engage with reading. This is why our programmes include giving children books and activities to keep.

- Parents and carers need help with shared reading too. Parents and carers need help to understand why reading is so transformative for vulnerable children and to build their confidence to share stories and embed them in family life. This is why we are working with families and designing support appropriate to the individual circumstances and needs of each child and family.
- There must be multiple moments of intervention. Establishing a routine of reading and using stories to support strong relationships needs repeat engagement, so our intensive programmes are built around multiple packs of books and resources delivered at different moments.

Letterbox has made my reading confidence grow and it has also made me use my imagination.
When I was younger I preferred picture books, but now Letterbox varies how much and what style I read. ""

BookTrust Letterbox Club Evaluation 2021–23

What is your experience of the role that books and reading can play in helping children from vulnerable backgrounds achieve their potential?

Proposal 3: Helping antenatal and early years practitioners promote shared family reading.

A programme of books, resources, inspiration, evidencebased guidance and training to make shared reading a part of family life from the earliest age.

Why this matters: Families interact with a wide range of practitioners in the early stages of their child's life including midwives, health visitors, nursery staff, childminders, and early years staff in schools. These interactions all represent an opportunity. Families who receive early support to read with their baby - for example from midwives, health visitors and other professionals – are more likely to read together from the first months of life". Shared reading is one of the most effective tools to support children's communication skills and school readiness, and these benefits are enhanced when practitioners support families to share books and stories at home. When early years practitioners encourage parents to share stories and show them how to do it, parents are more motivated and more confident.

The challenge: Some practitioners have been supporting the delivery of Bookstart with huge expertise for decades, but more partners could play a role in promoting reading to parents, and not all understand the wideranging ways in which it contributes to early development goals. Some childcare and early education practitioners don't have access to enough high-quality books and storytelling resources, or the skills and confidence to bring these to life.

BookTrust's solution: BookTrust's early years programmes include support for thousands of health visitors, librarians and early years practitioners. 83% of librarians liked or

loved working with us on our Storytime prize and programme, which took place in more than 2,000 public libraries^{VI}. In 2022/23 we supported over 4,000 practitioners in their work with families with our new Storyteller toolkits of books and resources – with over 90% of practitioners rating the quality of our resources very highly^V. We have piloted real-life mobile book-corners, digital resources and inspirational support from children's authors – but there are thousands more practitioners who could benefit from this support each year.

We want our support, guidance, tools and training in shared reading to be available to all early years practitioners, helping children reach their early development goals, particularly in areas where there are high numbers of children from lowincome families.

These resources really support us in encouraging families to attend the programmes, and to ensure they continue with book reading and rhymes at home. 27

Bookstart Toddler and Bookstart Pre-schooler Evaluation 2022–23 What works? Practitioners have worked with us to deliver Bookstart for over 30 years, collaborating in the design and refinement of our offer. Through this and our research with families we have learned that:

- Starting early changes family behaviour. During pregnancy and immediately after birth, families are receptive to receiving messages on how to give children the best start in life. When midwives, health visitors and community partners explain the benefits of shared reading, this motivates families to incorporate reading into routines and rituals, improving maternal mental health and establishing positive relationships. Fathers are motivated to see a role they can play in the early months of their baby's life. This is why we support health visitors and registrars to introduce shared reading in the first weeks of a baby's life and want to develop a new antenatal pilot to test the best moments and mechanisms for midwives to introduce shared reading to families.
- Practitioners has an impact. Our research shows that when trusted practitioners explain how important early shared reading is, parents are more likely to share stories with their child. When they receive advice on different occasions and from multiple influences in their lives, they are more likely to read regularly and embed reading habits.

 This is why we design our programmes with practitioners to include the key messages and explanations they need.



- Demonstrating shared reading has the strongest effect. When practitioners show parents how to use a book and tell a story, they turn abstract messages about reading into tangible and motivating support for families. This has a particularly strong impact for families with low reading confidence and engagement and it is important that practitioners are confident sharing stories in this way. This is why we give practitioners books that are great to read aloud to groups of children and resources to support this work, and why we want to develop practitioner training to help build storytelling skills.
- Quality books and resources are important. Books that are appropriate for children and families in different contexts, and resources that can be used in flexible ways, meet practitioners' needs and provide better support to families. Our toolkits, including backpacks containing resources and stories for different ages, are designed in response to practitioner feedback for use in different settings and contexts. Our digital resources motivate and support a diverse group of early years practitioners.

What does effective training and development for a diverse range of workers and professionals look like in your experience? How is it best embedded into existing activities?

Proposal 4: Supporting primary school teachers to foster a love of reading. Help to find high-quality books to share and resources to support home–school engagement with shared reading.

Why this matters: Shared reading continues to act as a catalyst for children's development once they start school. Exposure to a story-rich environment boosts children's speaking and listening skills, knowledge of the world, and social development, as well as significantly impacting on their capacity to learn to read²³. Children who read do better at school and make more progress across the curriculum²⁴. Reading has a long-lasting positive benefit on brain development and directly supports academic attainment: an enriching learning environment in their early years can have a positive impact on a child four decades later²⁵. As children grow, they need a choice of high-quality and relevant books to develop their preferences and identity as a reader, and to stay motivated to read. They need to see themselves and their lives represented in books. To support the development of readers, teachers need to understand the central role played by shared reading. Teachers need access to current, inspiring and representative books and evidence-based resources to engage children and families.

The challenge: Shared reading makes a strong contribution to children's academic achievement against early development goals and beyond – but it drops sharply when children start school. 53% of parents and carers of primary-age children say reading is not a big part of family life. Many say that practising phonics takes precedence over reading for enjoyment. In school, phonics provision is prioritised over other forms of reading activity, and in the early stages of school is the focus of engagement with parents. Children's

enjoyment of reading declines through childhood and is in overall decline, with England in the bottom part of international tables for reading for pleasure²⁶. Time pressure is a big challenge for teachers, who need accessible signposting to books and impact-focused guidance to support their work. Unless children choose to read, advances in functional literacy will not deliver the broader benefits of improved wellbeing, creativity and social mobility.

BookTrust's solution: BookTrust has a strong evidence base for how to build positive reading behaviours in children. We want to see shared reading as a central part of every school curriculum and every family's life.

Our research, guidance and book recommendations should be part of every teacher's toolkit so children discover a range of high-quality, relevant, inspiring and representative books.



What works? From our deep research in promoting shared-reading behaviour and wide-ranging expertise in the best books, we know that:

- Pamily engagement is vital. Teachers can engage families in shared reading by inspiring children and by encouraging reading at home. 57% of low-income families report that teachers influence their children to enjoy reading. This is why we support teachers through guidance and influencing tools such as films and posters. We have also carried out research trials into school transition practices that maintain shared reading at home, which could be scaled to help every child to make the best possible start at school and support their development of strong reading skills.
- Schools provide valuable access to books. 23% of low-income children aged 4-7 choose books for shared reading at school. We provide diverse and high-quality book recommendations for school libraries and book corners.
- Representation matters. Seeing their lives represented in books engages children in reading. This is why we support diverse book creators and

- promote inclusive books that represent characters from wide-ranging backgrounds and perspectives.
- Choosing the right book is important. As children grow, finding books that respond to their individual interests and choices becomes more important. Teachers play a vital role in helping each child discover the right book for them. This is why we signpost teachers to books for different ages and stages, covering different themes, and distribute an annual Great Books Guide of new book reviews.

I looked around at the class at break and all the students were sat faces in the book, completely in silence. They couldn't stop reading. I've never seen them do anything like that before. These books out on the table aren't just for show, they're loving it. ""

BookTrust Represents Evaluation 2021–22

What, in your experience, would help primary teachers and schools to support parents and carers to engage in shared reading at home?

Our work

Our programmes are designed to create multiple opportunities for children to have great reading experiences, particularly shared reading experiences in the early years. Further information about our programmes can be found on our website.

BookTrust's Programme Reach

Letterbox Club

Our intensive reading programme goes to vulnerable children in **87% of local authorities.**



Storytime
We partner with 2,400
libraries to deliver BookTrust
Storytime sessions.

BookTrust

We provide dual language **books** in over 30 different languages.

98%
of local
authorities
in England
use our SEND
books and
resources.

Over 25,000 children across Wales take part in the **Big Welsh Rhyme Time.**

Book reviews and recommendations

We publish over 370 book reviews a year and send our Great Books Guide to **every primary school.**

Over 260,000 Y7 and Y8 students choose a book to keep as part of Bookbuzz.



Bookstart Toddler and Bookstart Pre-schooler

We reach **over 400,000** low-income families with children aged 1–4 with books, activities and inspiration.



Bookstart Baby

We reach **over 90%** of newborn babies in England and Wales with books and resources.

Pori Drwy Stori

We reach **over 50,000** children in nursery and reception classes in Wales with bilingual resources.

Bookstart Early Years in Wales

We reach **over 30,000 2–3-year-olds** with books and resources

Author events and school visits

We reach **at least 50,000** children through our online and in person events with creators of colour.

All figures apply to England, Wales and N.I. unless otherwise stated.

References

BookTrust undertakes extensive research with families and children. This research has informed our understanding of the role of reading in families' lives, families' and children's reading habits, and the barriers and motivations they face. We regularly listen to feedback from partners via surveys and in-depth conversations.

Recent BookTrust research referenced in this document includes:

	Type of learning activity	Audience and sample size	Geographical scope
I. BookTrust; The Benefits of Reading (2023)	Summary review of the research evidence of how reading benefits children	Hundreds of peer- reviewed research studies, including several systematic reviews and meta- analyses	UK and international
II. BookTrust Family Survey 2022	Online survey with low-income families	2,148 low-income parents/carers of children aged 0-7	England, Wales, Northern Ireland
III. BookTrust Family Survey 2021	Online survey with families across all income groups	7,871 parents/ carers of children aged 0–17 and children aged 7–17 themselves. 500 low-income grandparents.	England, Wales, Northern Ireland
IV. BookTrust Early Years Discovery Research (2022–23)	DeepReal online and in person ethnography	66 low-income parents/carers of children aged 0-5	England, Wales, Northern Ireland

	Type of learning activity	Audience and sample size	Geographical scope
V. Bookstart Toddler and Bookstart Pre-schooler Evaluation (2022–23)	Mixed methods research of Bookstart Toddler (1–2 years) and Bookstart Pre- schooler (3–4 years) programmes: online survey, paper survey, qualitative fieldwork	Over 600 parents/ carers of children aged 0–5 and nearly 300 delivery partners	England, Wales, Northern Ireland
VI. BookTrust Storytime Evaluation (2022–23)	Mixed methods research of library partners delivering BookTrust Storytime	Around 200 library partners	England, Northern Ireland
VII. BookTrust Letterbox Club Evaluation (2021–23)	Paper survey of children receiving Letterbox Club	609 children aged 6–14 (across 2 years)	England, Wales, Northern Ireland
VIII. BookTrust Represents Evaluation (2021–22)	Mixed methods research of teachers, students and authors involved in BookTrust Represents	Data from 1,689 schools, survey responses from 40 schools, small number of interviews	England, Wales, Northern Ireland
IX. Bookstart Baby Evaluation (2021–23)	Online survey of parents/carers receiving Bookstart Baby	Over 500 parents/ carers of children aged 0-1	England, Wales, Northern Ireland

Other references:

- 1 Francis-Devine, B. (2023). Poverty in the UK: statistics. House of Commons Library.
- 2 ICAN (2023) Speaking Up for the Covid Generation.
- 3 Theberath, M. et al. (2022). Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of children and adolescents: A systematic review of survey studies. SAGE Open Med.
- 4 Education Endowment Foundation (2022). Best evidence on impact of COVID-19 on pupil attainment.
- 5 Sammons, P. M., Toth, K., & Sylva, K. (2015). Subject to Background: What promotes better achievement by bright but disadvantaged students? The Sutton Trust.
- 6 Farquharson, C., McNally, S., Tahir, I. (2022). Lack of progress on closing educational inequalities disadvantaging millions. The IFS Deaton Review.
- Jones, C. H., & Ball, H. (2014). Exploring socioeconomic differences in bedtime behaviours and sleep duration in English preschool children. Infant and Child Development, 23(5), 518-531.
- 8 Mindell, J. A., & Williamson, A. A. (2018). Benefits of a bedtime routine in young children: Sleep, development, and beyond. Sleep Medicine Reviews, 40, 93-108.
- 9 Sosa, A. V. (2016). Association of the type of toy used during play with the quantity and quality of parent-infant communication. JAMA Pediatrics, 170(2), 132-137.
- 10 Sturm, B. (2013). Bibliocreativity: how books and stories develop creativity. In Jami Jones and Lori Flint (Eds.), The Creative Imperative: School Librarians and Teachers Cultivating Curiosity Together. (pp. 203-214) Santa Barbara, CA: ABCCLIO.

O'Farrelly, C., Doyle, O., Victory, G., & Palamaro-Munsell, E. (2018). Shared reading in infancy and later development: Evidence from an early intervention. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 54, 69-83; Betawi, I. A. (2015). What effect does story time have on toddlers' social and emotional skills. Early Child Development and Care, 185(4), 594-600; Hale, L., Berger, L. M., LeBourgeois, M. K., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2011). A longitudinal study of preschoolers' language-based bedtime routines, sleep duration, and well-being. Journal of Family Psychology, 25(3), 423.

11

- 12 Newland L. A., et al. (2011). Mothers' beliefs and involvement: Links with preschool literacy development.
 International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach, 9, 67–90; Landry, S.H. (2011). The effects of a responsive parenting intervention on parent–child interactions during shared book reading. Dev Psychol. 2012 Jul, 48(4), 969-86.
- 13 Franks, A.M., et al. (2022). Parental Reading to Infants Improves Language Score: A Rural Family Medicine Intervention. J Am Board Fam Med. 2022 Dec 23, 35(6), 1156-1162.
- 14 Mol, S. E., Bus, A. G., de Jong, M. T., & Smeets, D. J. H. (2008). Added Value of Dialogic Parent–Child Book Readings: A Meta-Analysis, Early Education and Development, 19:(1), 7-26.
- 15 Sosa, A. V. (2016). Association of the type of toy used during play with the quantity and quality of parent–infant communication. JAMA Pediatrics, 170(2), 132-137.

- 16 Chacko, A., Fabiano, G. A., Doctoroff, G. L., & Fortson, B. (2018). Engaging fathers in effective parenting for preschool children using shared book reading: A randomized controlled trial. Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, 47(1), 79-93.
- 17 Hutton, J. S., Phelan, K., Horowitz-Kraus, T., Dudley, J., Altaye, M., DeWitt, T., & Holland, S. K. (2017). Shared reading quality and brain activation during story listening in preschool-age children. The Journal of Pediatrics, 191, 204-211.
- 18 Canfield, C. F. et al. (2020). Beyond language: Impacts of shared reading on parenting stress and early parent–child relational health. Developmental Psychology, 56(7), 1305.
- 19 Sammons, P. M., Toth, K., & Sylva, K. (2015). Subject to Background: What promotes better achievement by bright but disadvantaged students? The Sutton Trust.
- 20 Bell, D. (2020). Can participation in a shared reading activity produce relational benefits between foster carers and children in their care? Prof Doc Thesis, School of Psychology, University of East London.
- 21 Mak, F. (2020). Longitudinal associations between reading for pleasure and child maladjustment. Social Science & Medicine, 253, 112971; Boyce, C. (2014). Tell a different story: some reflections on the 11th Kilbrandon Lecture and its relevance to residential child-care. Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care, 13(3).
- Berridge, D. et al. (2020). Children in need and children in care:Educational attainment and progress.Rees Centre.

- 23 Mol, S. E., & Bus, A. G. (2011). To read or not to read: a meta-analysis of print exposure from infancy to early adulthood. Psychological Bulletin, 137(2), 267; Dowdall, N., et al. (2020). Shared picture book reading interventions for child language development: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Child Development, 91(2), e383-e399.
- 24 Brown, M. I., Wang, C., & McLeod, S. (2022). Reading with 1–2 year olds impacts academic achievement at 8–11 years. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 58, 198–207.
- 25 Farah, M. J., et al. (2021). Randomized Manipulation of Early Cognitive Experience Impacts Adult Brain Structure. J Cogn Neurosci, 33(6), 1197–1209.
- 26 Lindorff, A., Stiff, J., Kayton, H. (2023).PIRLS 2021: National Report for England. Department for Education.



