



MEDIA RELEASE

Australia Post research for Let's Read shows parents still need education about the importance of reading to children from birth

- **New report reveals 51% of parents don't realise reading books and sharing stories with children from birth gives them the best start in life**
- **Only 47% of parents are reading to their children from 0-4 months old**
- **Children aged 0-5 years are spending 8 hours a week watching television compared to 4.4 hours a week reading books and sharing stories**
- **34% of parents do not understand the importance of reading and sharing stories with their children from birth**

New Australia Post research* into how often and how early parents and carers are reading and sharing stories with children aged 0-5 years shows the need for more education around the importance of reading with children from birth.

In partnership with the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute (MCRI), the Australia Post research coincides with the launch of the **Let's Read National Early Years Literacy Campaign**. **Let's Read was developed** by the Royal Children's Hospital's Centre for Community Child Health, Melbourne. The Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and The Smith Family have partnered to implement Let's Read with communities across Australia.

Let's Read national campaign engages families, professionals and communities to promote reading with children from 0-5 years of age. The national launch will take place at the Royal Children's Hospital today, Tuesday 9th April at 10.30am.

Let's Read encourages families to share books and stories with children from 0-5 years in order to help them develop the skills they will need when it's time to start school.

The findings from the Australia Post research indicate that most parents understand the importance of reading and sharing stories with children aged 0-5 years but also indicates there are many parents and carers around the country needing additional education and access to resources in order to encourage early years literacy.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

The importance of early childhood literacy:

- 51% of parents and carers don't realise that sharing books with children from birth gives them the best start in life
- 89% of parents and carers said reading and telling stories was the most popular activity they had done with children aged 0-5 in the last week
- Only 44% of parents indicated they had read with their children at least every day in the week

How early are parents and carers starting to read to their children?

- Only 47% of parents are reading to their children aged 0-4 months compared with 94% of parents who are reading and sharing stories with their children ages 3-5 years
- 46% of parents and carers believe that sharing books from birth helps children become better readers for life

Common activities for children aged 0-5:

- 85% of parents and carers said that their children aged 0-5 enjoyed watching television
- Children aged 0-5 years are spending 8 hours a week watching television compared to 4.4 hours a week reading books and sharing stories.
- 85% of parents understand the importance of pointing out words and letters in books and naming them
- 80% of parents understand the importance of asking children to name words or make the sounds a word makes

Motivations for reading:

- 38% of parents say that building a closer relationship with their children aged 0-5 is the strongest motivation for spending more time reading and sharing stories
- Only 6% of parents and carers are motivated to read to make sure their children are ready for school
- 61% of parents said that household duties get in the way of spending more time reading to their children aged 0-5 and 50% of attribute it to tiredness.

Support services:

- 56% of parents and carers indicated there was 'some' or 'not much' information available to them about how to actually read or talk with their child aged 0-5
- 44% of parents and carers receive information and support about reading with children from friends and family more than services such as libraries, community centres etc.
- 13% of parents point to a deficiency in information available for childhood development

* Please note this research was provided by Australia Post on behalf of Let's Read.

For more information on Let's Read please visit www.letsread.com.au

For media enquiries and an executive summary of the research please contact:

Progressive PR & Publicity:

Jodie Artis

jodie@progressivepr.com.au

03 9696 6417 / 0414 699 186

Bella Anderson

arabella@progressivepr.com.au

03 9696 6417 / 0400193284

The Australian Government is working in partnership with the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and The Smith Family to deliver Let's Read.

Project partners:



Affiliated with:

