

BOYS AND BOOKS

Some boys take to reading right away. Other boys are reluctant readers. Jon Scieszka, a former teacher and author of many children's books that appeal to boys, started a web site (<http://www.guysread.com>) to help adults who want to raise boys to be readers.

Why are boys slower to dive into reading?

- Boys are slower to develop than girls. They may struggle with writing and reading skills in the early grades.
- Boys like action and movement. Reading makes them sit still and focus.
- Boys do not see many male role models around them reading for pleasure.

What can you do to encourage a boy who is a reluctant reader?

- Select books that appeal to boys. Some that have been voted as favourites include:

Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown

The Stinky Cheese Man by Jon Scieszka

Jumanji by Chris Van Allsburg

Ask your librarian to suggest books boys will like. Librarians are happy to help you. Many libraries also have computerized lists of books on all sorts of topics.

Laughter makes reading fun. Find joke and riddle books. Keep one in the kitchen or car.

Some boys find facts more interesting than fiction. Encourage boys to pick books and magazines on non-fiction topics that they care about. If they love cars, your librarian can help you locate material on hot rods, sports cars, classic cars, all kinds of cars. If they are interested in rocks, stars, or animals, there are many books that can help them explore those interests. Don't forget books on sports and the sports pages of the newspaper. A strong interest in a topic can pull a reluctant reader into books.

Encourage men to read to boys. Fathers, uncles, grandfathers, and older brothers can all read with boys. Some schools invite male school administrators, police officers, fire fighters and others throughout the community to come into the classroom and read their favourite children's books to students – increasing the number and type of adults that children can see as role models for reading for pleasure.

This tip sheet is being brought to you by the YMCA. YMCAs across Canada serve over 500,000 children in various programs. YMCA Canada is a member of the Abundant Assets Alliance, a partnership of YMCA Canada, the YMCA of the USA and Search Institute, working together to help young people obtain the 40 developmental assets that they need in order to thrive. To learn more about the developmental assets and how you can help your child build these assets, visit www.abundantassets.org.

One of the developmental assets that helps young people thrive is "Reading for Pleasure." This series of tip sheets and the resource, *Raising Kids Who Read*, created by YMCA Canada, helps adults build this asset with the young people in their lives. To download copies of any of these resources, go to http://www.ymca.ca/eng_ycdaresources.htm#Res6.



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