Health & Literacy Lifecycle

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*th*ings



Working together We want to work

together across the community to change this cycle for all families and make sure all children get what they need to learn to read.



Home language/s

Speaking more than one language is great for children's development.19, 20, ^{29, 33} Children can experience magical moments in any languge.29 Fluency in any language sets children up well to learn to read.7, 18, 29 Beyond that, exposure to English before school, gives children a head start.7, 18, 20



Health & literacy lifecycle

Children from difficult circumstances can struggle to learn to read.9,28 When they become parents they may share fewer magical moments with their children.9, ^{24, 28} One study found that children from high-income families hear 30 million words more by the time they start school.11 This can create a cycle of low literacy, poor health and difficult life circumstances from one generation to the next.9, 19, 21, 24, 27



Magical moments

Language develops most quickly from birth to age five.21 Openended back-and-forth chats with an adult are magical moments where children learn language skills.^{2, 11, 24, 26, 30} Magical moments happen when adults and children share stories, rhymes and chats about everyday things, new things, books and feelings.8,11,21,24,30 A strong bond between a child and their main carer is needed for magical moments to happen and for language to grow.^{24, 26}



Kinder & childcare

High quality kinder and childcare can also be a place where children have lots of magical moments with staff.19





Life circumstances

All of these experiences make up a person's life circumstances. Stress and trauma also play a part. This might be from from conflict, disability, separation, history, homelessness and more. Bigger systems also affect life circumstances, like government, work conditions, access to services and more.6

The life circumstances a child is born into has a big effect on how many magical moments they have, how easy they find it to learn to



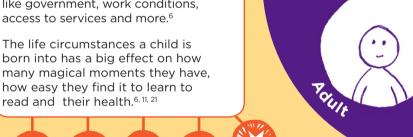
Books

Talking

Learning to read starts with talking (oral language).²⁴ By sharing magical moments with adults children learn vocabulary, grammar, story telling and more.



In these magical moments children learn about body language, and how to understand and control emotions.3, 26 These are important for making relationships.3, 26





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Children who read well

School results

usually do better at

school, enjoy it more

are less likely to take

drugs, be violent, have a teen pregnancy and

and stay at school longer.^{4, 9, 24, 26} Thev

more.^{21, 24}

Reading

In the first three years of school children learn to read.26 Those with strong oral language usually pick up reading easily and enjoy it more.24a,26 This means they often read more and get further ahead.^{10, 21, 24a, 28}



Friends

Children with oral language and reading problems are more likely to have trouble with peers, like being bullied and having fewer friends.3,5,16



Health Literacy

Difficulty reading makes it harder to understand the health system and health information, and harder to look after yourself.2,17



Jobs

People who find it hard to read are more likely to have lower paid jobs, be unemployed or be on a pension.^{9, 13, 16, 22, 24, 25} Low income almost always means poor health.^{2, 6, 13,}



Relationships

Poor health and loneliness are linked.1 Those with poor health are more likely to feel lonely, and those who feel lonely are more likely to have poor health.1



Youth justice

Many young offenders struggle to read and have oral language troubles.4, 12, 16, 26, 27 They are at high risk of long-term disadvantage.2



Behaviour

Children with oral language and reading difficulties are more likely to act up at school.4,24 Trouble communicating can also be mistaken for bad behaviour.4 These children are often punished by being taken out of class putting them further behind in their learning and isolating them from the school system and peers.4, 24, 26





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