

# Storytelling and Reading with Our Children

Bouncy tries to convince Knack to read a story. Bouncy is disappointed because Knack is busy. But later, Knack finds time to read to Bouncy, whose imagination is active. The film ends with a snapshot of the family reading together happily.

**Narrated Message** // *Our oral history is important. Through storytelling we share our values, teach our children and pass down our knowledge to the next generation. There are other ways too that can help us gain knowledge, such as reading. Life is busy and sometimes we forget to take the time to tell stories or read with our children. When we sit together to tell stories we share our culture and valuable teachings with our children. When we read together with them we help them with their education, we enrich their vocabulary and sharpen their minds. Storytelling helps inspire our children with the values, teachings and traditions of our ancestors. Reading with our children stimulates their creativity and broadens their horizons.*

## IDEAS

- It can be challenging juggling the tasks of daily life and also finding time for storytelling and reading. We can encourage storytelling and reading among all family members.
- Understanding that it is important to read and to read with our children in any language. We can read printed materials found at home or other places (signs, labels, directions or recipes); suggest that they read aloud to others; make books (draw pictures or write stories together).
- We may find it hard to read or not be comfortable with English or another language that is not our own. Reading with our children in our mother tongue is also useful. We can find out about services in the community that can help us with reading, such as literacy centres.
- Additional ideas may be to get reading materials (feeling comfortable with libraries); spending time to get to know what libraries offer (books, magazines and other tools such as toys and music); finding out about and taking part in reading activities at libraries (contests, presentations or Story Hour); encouraging children to borrow materials from libraries or even school; allowing children to choose their own books.

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

### Family Members

1. What are some of the messages in this film?
2. Why is storytelling and reading (particularly when it is done at home) so important for our children's learning?
3. Would you like to spend more time sharing stories and reading with your child? If so, what could help you to do this?
4. Where might you or your children get ahold of reading material to take home?
5. What would help you as parents get ahold of these materials?
6. What additional suggestions or personal stories do you have to share?

### School Staff and Community Leaders

1. Why is storytelling and reading (particularly when it is done at home) so important for students' academic success?
2. How might storytelling resonate more with Aboriginal families? Why might reading be challenging?
3. What are the factors that may prevent families from sharing stories or reading with their children on a regular basis?
4. How can the school encourage parents and children to read and share stories more often and together in ways that are practical and appealing?
5. Who are the key people at your school or board who might be available to support reading time at home?
6. Are there families in your class or school that require particular support with regard to this issue? What positive strategies could you or your school develop and implement to help offer more support?
7. What additional responses or strategies might further support and meet the specific needs of Aboriginal children and family members?