



# Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc.

*Advancing Library Excellence*

---

## [500 by 5 Early Literacy Program](#)

“The Charles County Public Library is dedicated to doing our part in our community to get every child ready to read. The 500 by Five initiative inspires children to read 500 books by 5 years old. Reading daily builds a stronger relationship with your child, increases basic speech and communication skills, improves logical thinking, increases vocabulary, enhances concentration and discipline, helps ease transitions to major milestones, promotes school readiness, encourages a love of learning, and it is just plain fun!”

## [Governor Larry Hogan Announces “Governor’s Young Readers” Initiative in Baltimore City](#)

“Statistics and independent reports have shown Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has dramatically improved early childhood literacy and reading scores for those enrolled.”

## [The Importance of Reading to Your Children](#)

The seven benefits of reading to children include: supported cognitive development; improved language skills; preparation for academic success; developing a special bond with your child; increased concentration and discipline; improved imagination and creativity; cultivating lifelong love of reading.

## [Read It Again! Benefits of Reading to Young Children](#)

- “Books provide a great opportunity for back-and-forth interactions with older children. This supports word learning and preliteracy skills.”
- “It is important to use new and different words for children to expand their vocabulary. Books often include words that adults would not otherwise use, like names of plants or animals.”
- “Dialogic reading is a type of interactive reading. When adults ask children questions, explain new vocabulary, and relate the story to a child’s life, they are engaged in dialogic reading. This helps young children develop important preliteracy skills, like story understanding and critical thinking.”

## [The Surprising \(and Scientifically Proven\) Benefit of Reading to Toddlers](#)

“Other studies show that shared reading also helps foster healthy brain development in babies and toddlers. That’s why pediatricians now ‘prescribe’ regular reading with babies and young children. For a baby, one billion new neural connections are made every second, building on themselves until 90% of the brain is developed by age five. It’s these pathways, or connections, that enable us to think, speak, and even move our bodies. The more connections the better, and one of the best ways to foster the development of these neural pathways is through reading. This study also fits, in my mind, with other research that shows that reading to young children helps make them more empathetic. When we read aloud to our kids, we use different words and sounds to express a wide variety of emotions. Regular exposure to this practice helps little listeners better understand their own feelings and the emotions of others.”