

Introducing the 0-PreK Program



THE CHILD INTRODUCTION

When children drive the process, the Raising A Reader® program takes on a life of its own. Children remind parents to return the bags, instruct family members in the careful handling of books, encourage all family members to read together, and more. It is important for Program Implementers to help the children they serve build and sustain the hype and excitement around starting the RAR program and sharing the books that they bring home weekly to their families.

Below is an example of how you might want to introduce the Raising A Reader program to the children that you are serving:

Introduce Raising A Reader During Circle or Group Time

Before sending the books home for the first time, plan to introduce Raising A Reader to the children during “circle time” or at another point in the day. The following steps outline some important points that you’ll want to share:

1. DESCRIBE the program.

For example, you might say:

“I want to tell you about something very special that we’ll be starting tomorrow. It’s called the Raising A Reader program. This is a book bag [HOLD UP BAG]. What do you think it has inside? That’s right, books! [OPEN BAG AND SHOW BOOKS] Each bag has several books inside. And every bag has different books!”

“Every week, each of you will be bringing one of these bags home to enjoy with your family. What do you think your family will say? You’ll be able to read these books over and over, by yourself and with your family, until it’s time to bring the bag back to school. And then you’ll get another bag to take home! Who wants to do that?”

“The child who sits in a reader’s lap is more privileged than a child who is given fancy computer games, state-of-the-art sports equipment, or designer clothes.”

Rosemary Wells
Children’s Book Author

2. Talk about SHARING.

For example, you might say:

“Everyone will be sharing these book bags. What other things do we share?”

Be sure to cover these ideas:

- Everyone will be taking all the book bags home, one at a time.
- The book bags belong to everyone so we all need to take good care of them.
- We keep the book bags at home for a while, and then we bring them back and then take home another book bag. (You may tell them the exact day of the week for bringing bags to school and taking them home)

3. Demonstrate GENTLE HANDLING.

For example, you might say:

“Do any of you have pets at home? Then you know that animals have to be handled very gently. Well, so do books! What can happen if you pull on a book’s pages? That’s right, they can get hurt. If this was your book, would you want someone else to hurt it? These books belong to all of us, so we have to be very careful with them.”

Other ideas to cover:

- How to hold books, and not flatten the spine.
- How to turn the pages.
- Use clean hands when holding books.
- How to carry the bags or put them gently in book bags.

4. Give each child a bag to EXPLORE.

For example, you might say:

“Okay, now here’s a book bag for each of you. Let’s look at our books and bags. How do we take the books out of the book bag? How do we handle them? How do we put them back in the book bag? What do you like best about the book bag? What are you going to do with the book bag when you take it home?”

“Okay, let’s pretend you’ve had the book bag at home for several days, and now it’s time to return it.”