



# 1000 Books Before School Brief

September 2016

State Library Victoria and Victorian Public Libraries invite children 0-5 years of age to participate in the *1000 Books Before School* early years literacy program.

Research tells us that the most reliable predictor of school success is being read to at home during early childhood. *1000 Books Before School* encourages parents and carers to read aloud to their children in the crucial first five years of life.

## About the campaign

*1000 Books Before School* is a well-established early years literacy campaign that started in the USA and is now run in libraries around the world. It encourages parents and carers to provide positive early experiences of reading at home, by reading 1000 books with their children before they begin school.

*Read at least three stories a day; it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear a thousand stories before they can begin to learn to read. Or the same story a thousand times!* — [Mem Fox](#)

The *1000 Books Before School* campaign is designed to influence the home learning environment by encouraging families and children to develop a reading habit. Research shows that 'home literacy', or engaging with language and reading at home, increases reading readiness and prepares children to enter school with the skills they need to succeed.

By reading just one book each evening, the 1000-book target can be achieved in less than three years and the child will be set for a lifelong love of books and learning – a great return on an investment of just minutes each day.

## Here are the reasons that it's awesome:

**Kids know that they're a part of something. Something big.** Whenever they finish a book they can place a sticker on their reading record. When they've achieved a reading milestone (eg 100 books), they are rewarded with a small prize. You can tell the kids really proud.

**Parents are cognisant about their role in school readiness.** Reading before school is not only a fun way to bond as family, it actually does terrific stuff to the brain. Like map it to be smart.

## **What does the research say?**

“Home literacy” or engaging in language and reading at home before school increases reading readiness.

Vocabulary, in its complex existence, is of paramount importance in reading readiness.

Vocabulary can be developed by sharing books.

Early successful language activities, such as sharing stories, contribute to the prevention of reading difficulties in school.

A home life that includes positive experiences with reading and the library ensures positive attitudes for reading once in school.

## **How the 1,000 Books Before School program works:**

This program is designed for families with children birth through age 5.

Upon joining, your child receives a registration pack, including a tote bag, stickers and reading records.

Record each book read. Repetition is good, so you may record a favourite book more than once.

Pick out books you enjoy and have fun reading together (use expression!). Find a time when you and your child are in a good mood to read. Reading together should never be a chore.

Each time you read a book you and your child can place a sticker on their reading record. When they've achieved a reading milestone (eg 100 books), they are rewarded with a small prize.

Visit the library often and discover the wonderful variety of books to check out and read together.

You may read books from anywhere: the library, from home, preschool, etc. You may also count books read at Story time programs at the library.

## **Benefits**

Research tells us that when children have positive experiences of the library and of reading at home, they are more likely to have a positive attitude towards reading once at school. The *1000 Books Before School* campaign helps libraries to support parents to play a vital role in building their children's early literacy.