

## **Promoting Reading at Home: Actions Speak Louder Than Words**

### **What Parents Can do to Motivate Elementary School Children to Read**

You don't need zillions of books at home or endless time to spare to incorporate reading into your family life. Listed below are ways to make reading a regular and meaningful routine in your home.

- **Make time for reading everyday.** Turn off the television (radio, computer, etc.) and read with or to your children for at least 20 minutes every night. Any favorite "must see" television shows can be taped for viewing at another time. Reading offers opportunities for meaningful discussions and builds the desire to read independently.
- **Travel with books on board.** Keep favorite books and/or books on tape in the car for reading on the go. On family car trips make it a game to point out and decode personalized license plates, identify license plates from different states and read billboards and interesting road signs.
- **Give books and magazines as gifts.** Select books and magazine subscriptions as birthday or holiday gifts. Books that are given as gifts become part of treasured collections; magazine subscriptions help children to develop personal interests and everyone loves to receive recreational mail!

### **What Parents Can Do to Motivate Secondary Students to Read**

Attempts to promote reading are best introduced to teens in casual ways by participating with your teen in purposeful reading. Demonstrate, in as natural a way as possible, how reading serves your needs. To help teens participate in purposeful reading try the following:

- **Be a reading role model.** Express your opinion in connection with magazine or newspaper articles; comment on interesting things you have read; express excitement over a novel you are currently reading; read aloud a thought-provoking paragraph at the dinner table.
- **Make time for reading everyday.** Turn off the television (radio, computer, etc.) and read for at least 30 minutes every night. Tape any favorite "must see" television shows for viewing at another time. Visit the library often so your teen can check out a variety of reading materials to sustain his or her interest.
- **Demonstrate an interest in what your teen is reading.** Ask your teen to recommend an author or book for you to read. Read one or two books written by one of your teen's favorite authors so you can discuss your reactions, favorite parts, etc. together.
- **Give books and magazines as gifts.** Make a list of your teenager's interests and select appropriate books and magazine subscriptions to give as birthday or holiday gifts. High-interest magazine subscriptions encourage teens to read even when schedules are busy and their time (or attention span) is limited. These can be used to initiate terrific conversations of interest to both teens and parents.