



**CENTRE COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION**  
*A SAMHSA Funded Drug-Free Community Coalition*  
*Supported By Centre County Drug and Alcohol*



**April 7, 2010 – Read Me a Story**

Helen Hanson is a retired James Madison University faculty member now joining story time in the Bennett Family Center. This weekly column, published on Wednesdays, is a collaboration of Centre County *Communities That Care* serving Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and Philipsburg-Osceola Area School Districts, and Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care* serving the State College Area School District.

"Here's the book I picked out." "My goodness--you've heard this one 3 times this week." How boring! Wait just a minute! What's happening here? Why is this book such a favorite? Why does your preschooler sometimes connect so to one particular book?

Do you pay particular attention to the illustrations in the picture book? I love to point out the chipmunk who appears somewhere on every page, or some other feature that appears very often. Your child is learning to pay attention to details, which is a skill that later helps him notice differences in letters of the alphabet and paves the way to reading.

Before you turn the page, do you ask what is going to happen next? If it's a familiar book, she is remembering the story line, also a necessary skill. If the book is new to her, she can use her logic to guess what will happen on the next page--developing thinking skills.

Do you read with emotion so there's no doubt your child will hang on every word to the end of the story? Developing a child's attention span is very important for success in a school setting. In the future, your child will need to pay attention to a teacher and hear the directions for the next activity. You help the process when you keep your child's attention for longer periods of time.

Does the story have rhyming words? Can your child hear the rhyming? Can he guess what the rhyming word will be before you say it? Can he come up with other rhyming words? Hearing different sounds will be another important skill in learning to read.

And what about those new words in the story--words she's never heard before? Right, time to stop for a moment and discuss the new word. Expanding vocabulary is another contribution to learning.

There are now so many books where a child can explore nature or books where a child can come to terms with her emotions when she sees what the book heroine works out.

Now, have I taken all the fun out of the story? Please, enjoy the reading, but also realize that your child can be gaining some valuable tools to learning in this process. But, maybe, the most important thing of all is that you and your child are connecting in love and companionship and that is the greatest gift of all to your child.

Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care*  
*Serving State College Area School District*

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