

Parents and Guardians,

A trip to the public library can be a magical experience for a child. There he can find the answer to almost any question, he can look at picture books that will expand his world, and he can learn research skills that will last a lifetime.

### **An Inspired Trip**

Suggest a trip to the library as part of a fun day's outing. Explain that the library is a place to borrow materials such as books. These materials can answer almost any question. Encourage your child to think of a topic that she would like to learn more about. If your child is interested in insects, she might enjoy a non-fiction book with pictures and facts about insects. If your child loves watching Clifford on television, she might like to check out of one Clifford's many books. If your child dreams of being a princess, she might like a fiction book about a fairy princess.

### **Start Small ... Think Big**

Look for the children's room when you first arrive at the library. Talk about how the area is organized. Most libraries have a fiction and a non-fiction section. Many also have areas for magazines, books on tape, and videos. Find the card catalog. Explain how the card catalog can help your child find the right book. Use the card catalog to help your child find the book he talked about before coming to the library.

Use the proper vocabulary as you teach your child about the library. Words like fiction, non-fiction, and periodicals can help your child learn how the library is organized. Once your child has mastered the children's section, expand to other parts of the library where she can find even more information.

Once at home, teach your child about the proper treatment of materials borrowed from the library. Show your child how to hold a book, the best way to mark a page, and how to keep a book safe from harm. Remind your child that he can keep the book for a few days, but he must return it to the library after that.

### **Final Thoughts**

The most important thing to remember when visiting the library is to make the trip fun. Let your child choose her own books. Let her learn about her interests. Encourage a love of books and a love of reading.

