


## RE[ad]SEARCH, Vol. 6

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### Parents and Reading



Doing the reading so  
you don't have to  
can read something

#### 1. [Kids Don't Read Books Because Parents Don't Read Books](#), *Forbes.com*, May 13

- We currently live in a culture that is more heavily text based than any other time in history. People read all day long. Google, Twitter, and Facebook deliver words. Still, what are people reading? It seems like they don't read many books. I'm not talking about kids, but rather adults.
- Middle schoolers (in particular 6th graders) are reading the most words per student. The average words per student increases through middle school and then starts decreasing again in high school. I see this as evidence that parents are sending the wrong message about books to their children. We value literacy, cheering on small kids to learn to read as quickly as possible. But when these kids become adolescents they attempt to directly emulate their adult role models. If adults don't read books then trying to act like an adult means not reading books.
- When it comes to books, however, most studies show that the text delivery method is irrelevant. Good reading behavior has nothing to do with technology. E-readers, tablets, laptop screens are all capable of delivering long-form text.
- Even if we eliminated every digital technology from our lives, our kids still won't read books unless we tell them in no uncertain terms that books are an important part of being an adult.

#### 2. [How Can You Persuade Children to Read to Themselves?](#), *The Guardian*, June 26

- Reading aloud might be the best possible introduction to reading, but what if your child doesn't want to read independently for pleasure?
- Don't worry about her not wanting to read any of the book you are reading aloud; keep that book as an experience that is quite separate from her either reading to you or reading to herself.
- Part of their enjoyment in the book will come from the special relationship they have with the reader during the time that the story unfolds. Being read to gives a child undivided adult attention with not much being demanded in return except sitting quiet and paying attention.

#### 3. [Pioneering Literacy Program Aims to Halve Number of Children Not Ready for School](#), *The Daily Telegraph (Australia)*, Aug. 27

*The article is about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This is one you can skip; the key points are below.*

- "If parents are supported around ways of talking about stories, their contexts and language, then it's going to increase the benefit of having books."

- “Using books as a starting point is fabulous because you’re engaging children through a meaningful context, which encourages one-to-one interactions.
- “You’re also engaging children in literacy that supports parents to have conversations around print and images, which helps develop a child’s appreciation of stories.”

#### 4. [Developing the Habit of Reading in Your Child](#), *The Destin Log*, July 3

*An excellent article for parents to raise readers with all of the steps we’re familiar with. This is a good link to forward on. Here is the closing paragraph:*

- It takes roughly thirty days to create a habit. Your child needs to spend thirty days in a row reading at least thirty minutes a day. If the child skips a day, start counting the days all over. Remember, this reading habit will increase your child’s skill in reading and has a big payoff in the end. You are responsible for building good habits in your child and becoming a reader is an important habit to develop. Monitoring the child’s building of good habits is a key parental responsibility.

#### 5. [Steve Jobs Was a Low-Tech Parent](#), *The New York Times*, Sept. 10

*Despite the heading, the article is not really about Steve Jobs but about how a high number of tech CEOs limit the screen time of their children. One theory is that they, better than anyone, understand the dangers of digital addiction. There should also be a strong distinction between time spent “consuming,” like watching YouTube or playing video games, and time spent “creating” on screens.*

- “So, your kids must love the iPad?” I asked Mr. Jobs, trying to change the subject. The company’s first tablet was just hitting the shelves. “They haven’t used it,” he told me. “We limit how much technology our kids use at home.”
- “Every evening Steve made a point of having dinner at the big long table in their kitchen, discussing books and history and a variety of things,” he said. “No one ever pulled out an iPad or computer. The kids did not seem addicted at all to devices.”

#### 6. [The Way to Beat Poverty](#), *The New York Times*, Sept. 12

- One reason the United States has not made more progress against poverty is that our interventions come too late. If there’s one overarching lesson from the past few decades of research about how to break the cycles of poverty, it’s the power of parenting — and of intervening early, ideally in the first year or two of life or even before a child is born.
- Scientists can measure cortisol in an infant’s saliva, and babies turn out to be easily stressed. Anything from loud noises to hunger to a soiled diaper floods the child’s brain with cortisol. But when Mom or Dad hugs the child, the stress and cortisol almost disappear.
- First, it is critical to intervene early, in the crucial window when the brain is developing and the foundations for adult life are being laid. That means helping women avert pregnancies they don’t want and, if they become pregnant, helping them deflect dangers such as drug use, alcohol and tobacco.
- Second, children’s programs are most successful when they leverage the most important — and difficult — job in the world: parenting. Give parents the tools to nurture their child in infancy and the result will be a more self-confident and resilient person for decades to come.

## Doctors and Reading

#### 7. [Learning Begins in Infancy, and Reading Is the Panacea](#), *New Jersey Star-Ledger*, Sept. 11

*Three paediatricians endorse Reach Out and Read.*

- As pediatricians, we take care of children's physical, social, cognitive and emotional health. One of our biggest concerns is when we see children who fail educationally – not just in high school or middle school, but in their elementary years.
- The impact of these negative environmental influences is greatest in the first 1,000 days of life.
- The task at hand is significant: Address the factors in a child's early life that influence the achievement gap; efficiently build the capacity and capabilities of parents to be their child's first teacher; scale it effectively and inexpensively across broad populations; and incorporate it into the ever-tighter time frame of the well-child visit. Fortunately, a solution was developed 25 years ago.

#### **8. [The Simplest, Cheapest Way to Give Your Child a Healthy Start: Read to Them](#), *The Globe and Mail*, July 6**

- The Canadian Paediatric Society says that waiting rooms should be chock full of books, that children should be handed books during visits because they are comforting, and in addition to prescribing reading to kids, they should be prescribed library cards, and parents-in-need should be steered to literacy programs.
- Literacy is the foundation of a good education and educational achievement is a good predictor of income. That trinity – literacy, education, income – is a powerful determinant of health. In fact, life expectancy, and health more generally, correlates pretty closely with education/income.
- Yet, illiteracy, innumeracy and lack of education are, at their root, pediatric problems.
- Low literacy is an issue that health practitioners – beginning with pediatricians – cannot afford to ignore. A health system worthy of its name needs to promote literacy because it is a virtual prerequisite to good health.

### **Assorted Articles**

#### **9. [How It Is: Words of Love and Ideas — 'Please Read to Me'](#), *Marin Independent Journal*, July 10**

*A short essay on the pleasures of reading aloud between adults.*

For us, reading to one another paves a way to be together — rekindle our relationship, an activity to look forward to where we share a world of words and ideas, and give thought to complicated subjects. We stretch our imaginations to uncover deeper meanings and connections between words, lines and paragraphs. It's time away from electronics, time to be intimate, to relax and to clean out the fogged lenses through which we see each other. We learn to listen and read creatively.

#### **10. [Literacy Garden Opens to Children's Wonderment](#), *The Clarion-Ledger*, June 28 (with video)**

- The Mississippi Children's Museum opened the Literacy Garden, which is designed to help develop language and reading skills among children by active play, innovative technology and interactive, inspirational exhibits.
- The Literacy Garden boasts an edible garden, storytelling mushroom caps, a "wordfall" that drops words like a waterfall, an "Act It Out" amphitheater, a reading nook, a creative wall for story sharing and a live treehouse. The 30-foot treehouse is surrounded by sycamore trees that eventually will connect and encase the structure.

#### **11. [Quebec elementary school bans homework](#), *Toronto Star*, Sept. 1**

- A school of 339 students has introduced a near-complete ban on homework, from Grade 1 to 6.
- An elementary school in Barrie, Ont. tried something similar in 2008 and found that student grades went up as a result.

- Elementary school students are often so busy with homework they don't have enough time to pursue extra-curricular activities, or simply play
- "The research is very clear that there's no benefit to homework at the elementary school level."

## 12. [Literacy Levels Must Take Front Seat in Election Campaign](#), *CBC News (New Brunswick)*, Sept. 2

- Adult literacy initiatives are a very important treatment but the only long-term answer is prevention that begins in the home and continues in schools through to graduation.
- Community action is needed to support families to accept their responsibility from the earliest days of a child's life and throughout the years with lifelong learning.
- "We hope that our government leaders continue to support our initiatives and make literacy a priority, not just before the election, but once in power – from a government, business and community point of view it is a darn good investment."
- Political leaders must unleash the joy, the power and the comfort of reading so that every New Brunswick citizen might reach her/his potential.

## Organizational Advancement

### 13. [How to Knock Off the Ice Bucket Challenge and Make Social Media Work for Your Cause](#), *Fired Up Fundraising*, Aug. 22

What made this phenomenon so successful?

- It was funny and playful. Even goofy.
- Young people cooked it up.
- Celebrities joined the cause.
- Person to person, people called out individuals to join in.
- People were empowered to actually DO something.

### 14. [Millennial Givers and a "Movement" Approach to Giving](#), *Nonprofit Quarterly*, Sept. 19

- Millennials favor "socially conscious, globally minded charities that champion civil rights, good business practices and environmental protection, among other issues." That is in contrast to their baby boomer parents, who "prefer to give to local charities that support the arts or cultural institutions such as museums."
- Boomers are more interested than millennials in reducing their tax obligations through charitable giving. "Provide less tax talk and ask them about their personal passions and interests."
- Millennials "are more interested in the impact their donations can make today rather than decades from now or after they're dead."
- Millennial donors want to be part of a larger social movement.
- That being said... making judgments about the behavior and interests of millennials compared to boomers is fraught with the danger of oversimplification.

### 15. [4-Part Anatomy of an Ideal Nonprofit Volunteer Experience](#), *Nonprofit Hub*, no date given

- **Website:** A website that is user-friendly and communicates clearly is essential to recruiting volunteers.
- **Scheduling, Preparation and Communication:** Once a volunteer has been recruited, over-communication is almost impossible.
- **On-site Experience:** Giving your volunteer a world-class experience while on-site at your nonprofit facility or event is the most crucial component.
- **Acknowledgement and Follow-Up:** You should keep in close contact with volunteers long after they leave your facility or event.