

imagine LIRE READ

Projet d'alphabétisation HME
MCH Literacy Project



Literacy starts at birth or, as research suggests, in utero. Literacy is recognized as a social determinant of health. There is evidence of a strong relationship between early positive literacy experiences and improved language and brain development. Unfortunately, many children enter school without the skills they need to learn to read. We know that parents take advice from health care professionals seriously. The *Lire/Imagine/Read (LIR)* program of the Montreal Children's Hospital works with health care providers to promote literacy and engage families in reading together.

LIR is active in six pediatric clinics, including the Pediatric Consultation, Residents' Continuity, Multicultural, Neonatal, Adolescent Mother-Baby Clinic and the Child Development Clinic.

What is Lire/ Imagine/ Read (LIR)?

Giving a book to a child helps calm an anxious child or engage a shy one and aids in assessing child development. Books give the physician the opportunity to talk about the benefits of spending family time together reading, improved language development, easing bedtime routines and school readiness.

Through *LIR* we are able to share books in nearly 30 languages alongside informative documents in 7 languages offering guidance to families.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES



Doctors and nurses in selected clinics give children aged 0-5 years a developmentally appropriate new book in their mother tongue. Parents are given a bookmark and oral and written information about the importance of reading for child development. They are encouraged to visit their local library and/or bookstores, and to continue a habit of reading.



Health care professionals screen families for literacy orientation (i.e., "Is reading an important activity? Do parents have difficulties reading?"). They may refer the parent to adult literacy services when appropriate.



The outpatient waiting rooms have a **reading corner** where volunteers read to children to model reading and help decrease the stress of waiting.



LIR is associated with other literacy programs at the Montreal Children's Hospital including **Biblio-Express** that delivers books to hospitalized children; **Books for Babies** that gives books to parents in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and encourages them to read as a way to feel closer to their baby; and our **Annual Family Literacy Day** celebrations that raise awareness about the importance of literacy.

LIR is based on the recommendations for pediatric literacy promotion by the Canadian Pediatric Society www.cps.ca/documents/position/read-speak-sing-promoting-literacy and Reach Out and Read www.reachoutandread.org.

For more information, please see our website www.thechildren.com/patients-families/hospital-services/lireimagineread or call 514-412-4400, ext. 22383.

Helping
health care
providers
engage
families in
literacy
promotion

Hôpital de Montréal
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Centre universitaire
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