

# Bookshine

## A guide to enjoying books and reading with deaf children



Bookstart  
BookTrust



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

 **BookTrust**  
Inspire a love of reading

# Welcome to Bookshine

This guide offers lots of ideas on how to enjoy books with your deaf child. It also suggests a range of books that you can share together. We have included tips given to us by parents and experts that you might find useful when you're sharing books with your child. Not all of the information or books will be right for every child but we hope that this is a useful starting point.

Bookshine is part of the Bookstart programme which offers the gift of free books to children at key ages before they start school. Bookstart aims to inspire a love of reading that will give children a flying start in life.



Please note that for the purposes of this booklet, BookTrust is using the term 'deaf' to describe people over the whole range of deafness/hearing loss. See our website for more information. The leaflet also refers to British Sign Language (BSL) but Bookstart acknowledges that some families may use Makaton or another form of signing.

# Why share books with babies?

- Sharing books together develops a closer bond between parent or carer and child.
- Reading with your child from an early age develops language and literacy skills.
- Books can help to develop a child's health and emotional wellbeing.
- Sharing books promotes parents and carers as the child's most important and enduring teachers.
- Children become familiar with books, learning how to hold them and turn the pages.

# Choosing books

Here are some ideas on the type of books you might want to consider for your child. There will also be specific book suggestions later on in this booklet.

- Very young children like books that are highly visual and colourful. Clear, uncluttered images can help children understand the story.
- 'Touch and feel' books are great fun and will give you plenty to talk about.
- Look for books about everyday routines and familiar environments. Or choose books that link with the seasons or special times in their lives, like birthdays, cultural events and holidays.
- Be prepared to share the same book over and over - young children love and need repetition.
- Picture dictionaries can be useful (even in different languages!) because they group together images of different items in a theme.

- When your child shows interest in specific topics, look out for books on these subjects.
- As your child grows, encourage them to play an active role in choosing books.
- Try to share a variety of books with your child - remember your local library has many books for you to borrow.



# Sharing books

Sharing books together is a fun experience for everyone in the family. Here are some suggestions for making it as easy and enjoyable as possible.

- Think about how you are sitting. Can your child clearly see your face? Sitting at the same level or angle as the child can be helpful.
- You will want to try to keep your child's attention and establish good eye contact.
- Make sure there is enough light so your child can see the book and your face clearly.
- Initially, it might be helpful to focus on the pictures until your child is ready to concentrate on words as well. It's important to give your child time to read the story and understand it through the pictures.



- If you don't use BSL, try using gestures to demonstrate the story. Try using your facial expressions to help you show characters' emotions.
- Don't rush. Be guided by your child's interest in the book - don't simply focus on telling the story as it is written.
- Talk about the meanings behind the words.
- It may help if you prop the book up in front of your child and try looking over the top of it (you will probably become an expert at reading upside down!)





# Moving along

With time, your child's confidence with books will grow, and they will become more and more involved.

- Encourage your child to play more of a role in telling the story. You could try getting them to join in with actions or words that are repeated in the story.
- Encourage your child to read the characters' emotions by looking at their expressions.
- Find new words (or signs if you are using BSL) and use books to develop your child's language.
- If you use BSL, you might want to emphasise signs by making yourself very small when signing 'mouse', or by making big movements when signing 'elephant' for example.
- Older children often like books being repeated – this builds their confidence and is a natural part of language development.



# Keeping it fun

You know best what your child enjoys but here are a few ideas about how to make sharing books as fun as possible.

- Use real life objects or make props to help tell the story.
- Play at dressing up as characters and act out simple scenes from the story.
- Using funny facial expressions can help to keep children entertained.
- Try using puppets to act out the story - you can even have a puppet on one hand and do some simple signs with the other.
- Puppets by Post (details at end of this booklet) produce many amazing puppets - including some with fingers so you can make them perform basic signs.



- Let children tell you the story themselves, using their own toys and props.
- Make a story sack! A great way of bringing stories to life, a story sack is a large cloth bag containing a children's book with interactive materials to make reading even more fun.
- Be aware that there will be times when your child will be more or less engaged depending on their mood.
- Look out for Bookstart events in your local library.
- Everyone likes to find themselves in books. Don't forget to look out for books with positive images - BookTrust's guide to accessible books and the website both feature some suggestions, and the range is constantly growing.



# Books to enjoy

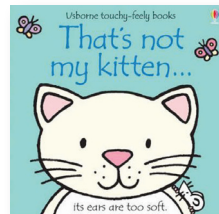
There are many, many wonderful books out there to explore with your child. This booklet suggests just a few you may want to consider.

'Touch and feel' books are great for sharing with all children. They are ideal for stimulating the senses and for discussing words like 'smooth', 'soft', 'bumpy' and 'sticky'. Look out for 'touch and feel' books which have plenty of variety, flaps and recognisable shapes and textures.

## **That's not my kitten**

by Fiona Watt, illustrated by Rachel Wells  
Usborne Books  
ISBN: 978 0746041833

One of a growing series of 'touch and feel' board books with interesting textures and shapes for inquisitive fingers to explore. Series also includes *That's not my teddy* and *That's not my train*.

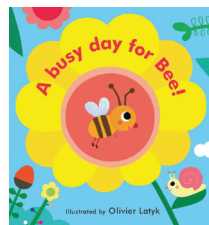


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## **A busy day for Bee!**

Illustrated by Olivier Latyk  
Words and Pictures  
Dorling Kindersley  
ISBN: 978 1910277300

A bright and bold book that follows the busy day of the bee, butterfly, duck and frog. This clever book allows children to turn the pages and change the expressions and actions of the different animal characters, introducing them to new emotions as they go along.



## **Red Car Green Car**

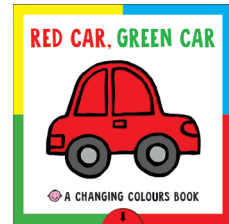
by Roger Priddy

Priddy Books

ISBN: 978 1783413744

A fun and imaginative book that will help your child start learning different colours. Children will love pulling the tabs on each page to change the colours and reveal a new animal surprise each time!

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Baby signing is becoming more and more popular. It can be a great way of learning to communicate long before children learn to speak their first words. You can start introducing your baby to simple signs from just a few months old. Signing and clearly saying the words at the same time (so your baby can see your lips) has been proven to help children's understanding of language and their attempts to communicate themselves.

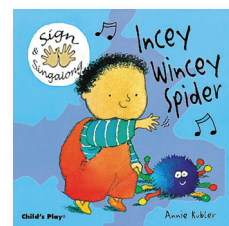
## **Incey Wincey Spider – Sign and Singalong series**

by Annie Kubler

Child's Play

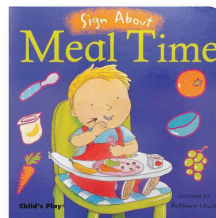
ISBN: 978 1904550037

A series of bright, colourful books featuring children showing signs and actions to accompany simple rhymes like Incey Wincey Spider and Teddy Bear Teddy Bear.



## **Sign About – Meal Time**

by Anthony Lewis  
Usborne Books  
ISBN: 978 0746041833

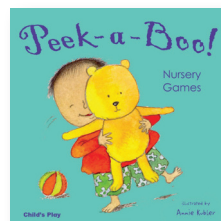


A great introduction to simple signs which can be used with children from a very early age. One of a series which also includes Play Time, Getting Ready and Going Out.

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## **Peek-a-Boo!**

by Annie Kubler  
Child's Play  
ISBN: 978 1904550839



One of a series of superb baby books, Peek-a-Boo features rhymes with games to involve and entertain small children. The exuberant characters happen to include a parent with a hearing aid.

**All children like to see themselves in books. Whilst there are not many early years books showing children signing and/or using hearing aids, there are a few, so they are worth looking out for.**

All the books in this guide which feature signs use BSL but not all books do – so check before you buy!

## Little Space Explorers

by Anthony Lewis  
Child's Play  
ISBN: 978 1846430381

A double sided figure can be slipped into acetate pockets throughout the book as he takes an exciting journey into space. One of the characters in the book has a hearing aid.

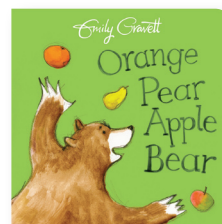
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## Orange Pear Apple Bear

by Emily Gravett  
Macmillan Children's Books  
ISBN: 978 1405090223

A delightfully simple book which uses just four words in a range of different orders to great effect. Fun for the very young but also lots of material to engage older ones – try acting out concepts like 'over', 'under' and 'next to'.

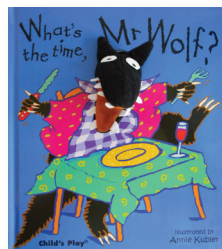


BookTrust's website includes more information and ideas for books [booktrust.org.uk](http://booktrust.org.uk)

## What's the time, Mr Wolf?

by Annie Kubler  
Child's Play  
ISBN: 978 0859539449

A captivating story of wolves with dinner on their minds. The wolf finger-puppet attached to the book brings the story to life and is great fun for snapping at little fingers, and clocks on each page help learn to tell the time.



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## LET'S SIGN Five little monkeys jumping on the bed

Product code DVFCX6  
Available from [deafbooks.co.uk](http://deafbooks.co.uk)

An interactive e-book which you can download. Click on the signs to find 'dictionary' pages, flashcards and even a quiz. You can print off the A4 pages of rhyme, numbers pages, quiz, keyword flashcards of signs and pictures, and all the signs with descriptions.



Look for ways to make book sharing as interactive as possible. This can be done using DVDs, puppets, props – or any great book and a bit of imagination!



# Resources for parents and professionals

## **A first guide to baby signing**

by Katie Mayne  
Amazing Baby  
ISBN: 978 1592235254

A comprehensive user-friendly guide to signing with your baby. Each BSL word is accompanied by stunning black and white photographs of young children's demonstrations, and step-by-step instructions.

## **Let's sign Early Years**

by Cath Smith and Sandra Teasdale  
Co-Sign Communications  
ISBN: 978 0954238414

An easy-to-use collection of everyday BSL signs. The signs are well chosen and illustrated with babies and very young children in mind. Created by experienced professionals – one deaf and one hearing.

## **TinyTalk Let's sign baby signing DVD**

A DVD introducing 150 baby signs, clearly demonstrated and brought to life with imagery and music. One of many resources from TinyTalk.

**[tinytalk.co.uk](http://tinytalk.co.uk)**

## **Signed Stories**

Signed Stories is a free interactive website featuring some of the UK's best children's stories with wonderful animation, fun illustrations, an engaging British Sign Language translation, text and sound.

**[signedstories.com](http://signedstories.com)**

## ICAN

ICAN is a charity working for children with speech and language difficulties. Runs an Early Years programme called Early Talk.

**[ican.org.uk](http://ican.org.uk)**

## The National Deaf Children's Society

The National Deaf Children's Society is the national charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people. See detailed information overpage.

**[ndcs.org.uk](http://ndcs.org.uk)**

## British Deaf Association

The BDA offers a "Sign Community" website, packed with information and advice

**[bda.org.uk](http://bda.org.uk)**

## Puppets by Post

Puppets from around the world, many of which are ideal for deaf children, can be ordered by both individuals and organisations. Look out for their series of 'mitts' ideal to bring songs and stories to life.

**[puppetsbypost.com](http://puppetsbypost.com)**

## Afasic

A UK charity helping children and young people affected by speech, language and communication difficulties, their families and the professionals working with them.

**Helpline number: 0300 666 9410**

**[afasicengland.org.uk](http://afasicengland.org.uk)**

More useful websites:

**[actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://actiononhearingloss.org.uk)**

**[tinytalk.co.uk](http://tinytalk.co.uk)**

**[talkfirst.net](http://talkfirst.net)**

**[signwitholli.com](http://signwitholli.com)**

**[cacdp.org.uk](http://cacdp.org.uk)**

**[actiondeafnessbooks.org.uk](http://actiondeafnessbooks.org.uk)**

# The National Deaf Children's Society

The NDCS is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

We represent the interests and rights of all deaf children.

NDCS believes that the family is the most important influence on a deaf child's development. We support deaf children through their families as well as directly.

NDCS provide the following services through our membership scheme. Registration is simple, fast and free to parents and carers of deaf children and the professionals who work with them. Contact the Freephone Helpline or register through **[ndcs.org.uk](https://www.ndcs.org.uk)**.

- » **Freephone helpline 0808 800 8880** (voice and text) offering clear, balanced information on many issues relating to childhood deafness, including schooling and communication options.
- » A range of publications for parents and professionals on areas such as audiology, parenting and financial support.
- » A regularly updated website with information on deafness and NDCS publications.
- » A team of family officers who provide information and local support across the UK.

- » Specialist information, advice and support from our benefits and education appeals advisers.
- » An audiologist and technology team to provide information about deafness and equipment that may help deaf children.
- » An equipment loan service that enables deaf children to try out equipment at home or school.
- » Family weekends and special events for families of deaf children.
- » Sports, arts and outdoors activities for deaf children and young people.
- » A quarterly magazine and regular email updates.
- » An online forum for parents and carers to share their experiences:  
**[ndcs.org.uk/parentplace](https://ndcs.org.uk/parentplace)**
- » A website for deaf children and young people to get information, share their experiences and have fun  
**[buzz.org.uk](https://buzz.org.uk)**

Go online to discover more about the magic of sharing stories, books and rhymes.

For more information on Bookshine visit **booktrust.org.uk**

Bookstart is run by BookTrust, an independent charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to engage with books. The written word permeates all our activity and helps us to fulfil our vision of inspiring a lifelong love of books for all.

Visit **booktrust.org.uk** for plenty of information on reading for pleasure and family reading.



Special thanks to the National Deaf Children's Society for their help in developing the Bookshine project and ongoing partnership.

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Katie Mayne and TinyTalk; Beth Cox; Child's Play; Letterbox Library; British Deaf Association; all the other organisations, teachers, parents and children who have shared their tips and expertise.

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