



The Terryville Public Library Children's Department recognizes that each child is different and develops skills in motor, social, language, etc. areas at different rates. Children's temperaments may also determine their ability to focus, participate or interact. We acknowledge and respect each child's individual skills and create opportunities for their success in storytime.

Toddler time (12-24 months old)
Thursdays, 10:30 – 11:15 am

Description of age group:

Toddlers love to explore. They are very curious about the world around them and are frequently described as being "into everything." With the ability to walk comes a new sense of independence. Children at this age will often establish themselves as individuals with the frequent use of "No" and loud protests to assistance from an adult or caregiver. At the same time, toddlers often need to re-establish a feeling of security by returning to "home base" for comfort before venturing out again. While they are developing their independence, routine still provides comfort to this age group. They like to know what is coming next. At this age, children are learning through play. Not only are they developing motor skills, they are learning important social skills such as sharing, empathy and friendship.

What a typical storytime includes:

Toddler time typically follows a set routine each week. Children are welcomed to the room and can select a mat on the floor to sit on. We begin with an opening song that children will become familiar with over the course of the session. We then do one or two fingerplays, read a story, bring children back to the circle with a movement activity or bouncing rhyme, and read a second story. We may do another fingerplay or movement activity before we sit back down to roll a ball. Children are then welcomed to play for the remainder of storytime.

Why we include these elements:

- Understanding children's need for routine, our typical storytime provides consistency in the opening song, rhymes used, movement activities presented, and closing activity and song.
- We also recognize that children at this age have an extremely short attention span. They are simply too busy exploring their world to remain attentive for long periods of time. We read short stories that encourage participation, and frequently recall the children's focus by offering many short movement activities and fingerplays.
- Children at this age also enjoy listening to and dancing to music, and we utilize music at several points in the program.
- Children are comforted by being close to parents or caregivers, and we encourage children to experience storytime with an adult through bouncing rhymes, rhymes that end

with a hug or tickle, or directing children back to parents between activities. We do however recognize that children will quickly (and often consistently) almost immediately set back out to explore more.

- As children learn through play, we provide 20 minutes for toddlers to play with toys selected and reserved for Toddlertime. At this age, toddlers often “parallel play”, where all children are playing, but not necessarily with each other. The librarian will create opportunities for playing together when appropriate.

What parents or caregivers can do to make storytime more effective:

Because Toddlertime is often the first storytime experience for children, and sometimes the first library experience for the toddler, becoming comfortable with the environment may take time. Parents can assist in this transition by talking about the visit before coming to the library, bringing the child in at least fifteen minutes before the program starts, or visiting the library at other times during the week to familiarize children with the library and librarian.

It is important in maintaining routine to be on time to storytime. Late arrivals can also be a distraction to other children. If your child has a meltdown during storytime (not cause for embarrassment or unease), please take them out of the room for a few minutes to calm down. You are welcome to return when they are ready.

Especially at this age group it is difficult for children to focus on books. Help your child prepare for storytime by reading with them at home. They will quickly become familiar with the routine of reading and look forward to it. They will also enjoy being close to you during the reading.

Repeat rhymes at home with your children so that they are excited about participating at the library. Your librarian will provide you with a listing of the commonly used rhymes and movement activities at the beginning of the session.