

# Read-Aloud Resolutions for the New Year

*By Brigid Hubberman, Executive Director, Family Reading Partnership*

“Reading is more than a skill; it is a lifestyle,” says author, teacher, librarian and self-proclaimed “radiologist,” Esmé Raji Codell, as she speaks about her dedication to promoting read-aloud everywhere she goes. “Anyone who says that they care about children and education and isn't reading aloud is lying or about to make the discovery of a lifetime,” Codell asserts.

Clearly Esmé Codell is a woman on a mission. She sees herself as a Johnny Appleseed of reading, and points out that even though Appleseed planted one seed at a time, he was able to change the landscape of our country.

Family Reading Partnership shares Esmé Raji Codell's passion for planting reading seeds that will change our landscape and better the lives of our children and families. To kick off the New Year, we've compiled a menu of eight “Read-Aloud Resolutions”— traditions and routines for you to make books part of the lifestyle of the children you care about.

## Read-Aloud Resolutions

- 1. We'll make time for regular read-aloud.** Of all the activities you take time for with your children, few will be as satisfying and as good for them as reading aloud regularly. The bonding, benefits and memories will last a lifetime.
- 2. We'll create special reading places.** Under a card table, with pillows in a closet, blankets twirled to make a reading nest, even a favorite chair to snuggle in — there are many ways to make special reading nooks for your children.
- 3. We'll read, write and play with words more.** It is important that your children find meaning and pleasure in words. Read riddles, write jokes, memorize poetry and have family poetry slams, tell stories, make lists, compose letters, sing, and talk, talk, talk!
- 4. We'll give books as gifts.** Books increase in value for a child when they come as a gift from someone special, or on a special occasion. Every occasion is the right one for a book gift! A child's own book collection, even if small, is very important.
- 5. We'll create library traditions.** Making routine trips to the library and seeding the love of books go hand in hand. Help your child keep ongoing lists of books he or she might want to check out, or growing topics of interest. Get a special library book bag for your child to fill, and make regular library visits exciting.

**6. We'll read more for pleasure and make sure our children see us reading.**

When was the last time you enjoyed a great book? Every time your children see you take time to read a book, you are modeling reading as a lifestyle, and we promise it is contagious! Talk about the books you are reading, read interesting newspaper articles aloud and make what everyone is reading part of regular family conversation.

**7. We'll check out some books on reading-aloud.** There are many great books filled with tips and techniques for taking you to the next level of reading to your children. Family Reading Partnership recommends Esmé Raji Codell's, "How to Get Your Kids to Love Reading," Jim Trelease's, "The Read-Aloud Handbook," and Mem Fox's "Reading Magic."

**8. We'll consider supporting organizations that promote reading.** In addition to the Family Reading Partnership (54 Gunderman Road, Ithaca), Tompkins Learning Partners (124 W. Buffalo St., Ithaca) is doing important work in support of adult literacy and all of our public libraries need our support, including Tompkins County Public Library (through the TCPL Foundation 101. E. Green St., Ithaca)