

## 17 How parents can enable a toddler to make decisions at story time in the home

- Rachel and Jack read stories to their little girl Bonnie most days, but usually in the evening time. Bonnie knows she can ask for stories anytime she is with her parents.
- They often have limited time at story time, so they explain to Bonnie that there is enough time for her to choose two or three stories from her bookshelf, which is on her level.
- They make sure to leave enough time for Bonnie to choose the stories and for a parent to read the stories.
- Sometimes, she doesn't want to choose a story or seems tired, so they ask her if she would like a parent to choose a book instead.
- Bonnie knows the names of some books, so she sometimes asks for them by name instead of going to the bookshelf.
- She really enjoys choosing books, and Rachel or Jack read the titles of what she has chosen out loud.
- When she was younger, her parents gave her a few options of books to choose from. Now that she is older, they ask her if she would like to go to her bookshelf and pick two or three stories depending on how much time they have.
- She often chooses the same books day after day. Her parents remind her of that, but she usually asks to read it again.
- Bonnie sometimes asks for story time in different places, such as sitting on the floor, sitting on a parent's lap or on a chair and her parents act on her wishes if possible. If Bonnie's granny is reading the story, the granny explains that she can't sit on the floor.
- Rachel and Jack ask Bonnie if she would like to hold the book or turn the pages or for them to do this.
- Sometimes Bonnie likes Rachel or Jack to ask her to find characters from the story, such as 'Can you find the mouse?' or 'What does the lion say?', which allows her to be part of the storytelling.
- Once the stories have been read, Rachel or Jack will say goodbye or good night to the characters, so Bonnie knows it is the last story.
- Sometimes her parents suggest story time and Bonnie says she wants to play or do something else, which her parents accept.



## How the toddler is ensured Space, Voice, Audience and Influence at storytime

### Space

- Bonnie feels safe to express her views about what stories to read and where to read them because she does this with trusted adults, and they always let her choose.
- Bonnie's parents allow her enough time to choose stories and where to read them.

### Voice

- Rachel and Joe support Bonnie to choose stories when she asks for or needs support.
- Bonnie can ask for her chosen stories and where to read them, but she can also choose to do something else during story time, and her parents support her choices when possible.
- Bonnie is offered different ways of giving her views, such as getting the books herself, a parent getting the books she chooses, a parent suggesting stories, holding the book, turning the pages and finding characters in the stories.

### Audience

- Rachel and Jack show they are ready and willing to listen to Bonnie because they prioritise her views and choices during story time.
- Rachel, Jack and Bonnie's granny explain to Bonnie granny can't sit on the floor and that they only have a certain amount of time for story time. They help her understand that story time is over by saying goodnight or goodbye to the characters.

### Influence

- Bonnie knows how much influence she has on decisions because her parents give her lots of choices but explain things that can't happen and how much time they have.
- Rachel and Jack give Bonnie feedback and the impact of her views by acting on her views when possible.
- Rachel and Jack explain the reasons for certain decisions, such as a granny not being able to sit on the floor and the amount of time available for story time.