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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Book fair reminds us that reading is learning



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The Miami Book Fair International has begun, filling downtown streets with author booths, exhibitions, and activities for readers of all ages.

This is a great time to bring awareness to the fact that literacy and the joy of reading should begin well before children enter kindergarten, as 90 percent of a child's brain develops by age 5.

This makes fostering early literacy crucial to children's lives and to the progress of all of society. It starts at home with a child's first teachers: their parents.

With something as simple as story time before bed, parents can help children develop the skills they need for the rest of their lives.

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Also, by using non-traditional opportunities to read, such as the train or bus, parents can create special bonding and teaching moments while en route to school or work.

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe (ELC) works to ensure that low-income children across both counties enter school ready to succeed.

As a reminder to "Read and Ride," we will be distributing free children's books on the Miami Metromover and at Government Center station on Nov. 17, as well as to all Book Fair guests at our Early Learning Coalition tent all weekend.

We'll also be hosting several fun and interactive activities for kids designed to foster a love of reading and learning, in partnership with the Miami Children's Museum at the Children's Alley Tot Lot.

It's always the right time to read with your child. We invite you to visit us on the Metromover on Nov. 17 or anytime this weekend at the Book Fair to unplug and connect, pick up a free children's book, and get started with your little one.

*EVELIO C. TORRES,*

*PRESIDENT AND CEO,*

*EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF MIAMI-DADE/MONROE,*

*CORAL GABLES*