

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Children's Reading Habits Influenced By Parents Quick Tips to Create Avid Readers

Teaneck, N.J. (February 12, 2008) – Americans old and young alike are not reading. An alarming poll by Associated Press-Ipsos found that one in four Americans did not read any books last year. The National Endowment for the Arts reports less than one-third of 13-year-olds read every day, and one in four high school seniors don't read at all unless it is for an assignment. Reading is an essential skill for school and life. If parents want their children to succeed in both then they need to make reading an integral part of the family routine.

“Reading is a necessity. People use reading everyday to gather information and make important decisions,” says Dr. Mary Mokris, reading specialist for Kumon Math and Reading Centers. “Parents need to set an example by showing children how we use reading in our every day lives.” Dr. Mokris offers these time-efficient tips to make reading part of your family routine:

Make reading a family activity. Start by joining your local library and make weekly visits. Inquire about story-time activities. At home, set aside time to read as a family at least once a week. Talk with your children about their books so that they will know that you are interested. Help younger children write their own story to read to the family. In addition to subscribing to your local paper, subscribe to magazines for your children that cover their interests. If your child is a sports fanatic, encourage him to read previews of the big game and ask what he thinks will happen. If your child is a moviegoer, have her read the weekly reviews and talk about her opinion of each film.

Make your home reading ready. Create a reading area in your house that has comfortable furniture, good lighting and most importantly, books. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement Literacy Study found a direct link between the number of books at home and the reading development of that child. Stock this area with books that your children will enjoy, such as how-to books, mysteries, comedies, reference books or even fairytales. Reading is easy when the materials are immediately available.

Do it together. In addition to reading as a family, invite your children to read with you. For beginning readers, show them how to use reading in everyday situations by asking them to help you read a cooking recipe, street signs, or the synopsis of a DVD. As your child matures, ask them what they think certain words mean and have them look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary. If you find a word that you don't know, look it up with your child so that you can both learn something new. Help your older children get involved in current events by discussing a newspaper article with them or have them summarize an interesting article. Retelling a story helps develop a child's comprehension

skills. These simple activities work anywhere and demonstrate that reading is a useful life skill.

Need help selecting books that appeal to your child's interests or reading ability? Kumon Math and Reading Centers offers a free Kumon Recommended Reading List, which includes a range of 350 titles for any reading level. A number of books have multicultural themes. The list also highlights a section of books that are perfect for parents to read aloud with their younger children. Students can find books on anything from sports to science or adventure books. Stop by a local Kumon Center for your copy. For locations, visit www.kumon.com or call 800-ABC-MATH.

About Kumon Math and Reading Centers

Kumon [kōō-mōn] is an after-school math and reading program. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the learning method uses a systematic individualized approach that helps children develop a solid command of math and reading skills. Through daily practice and mastery of materials, students increase confidence, improve concentration and develop better study skills. Kumon has 26,000 centers in 45 countries and more than four million students studying worldwide.

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