



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Senator Farley Encourages Parents To Read To Children As March 2nd Is Read Across America Day

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**Happy
Birthday
Dr. Seuss!**



As Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Libraries, Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady) informs families that Friday, March 2nd, is the National Education Association's Read Across America Day, which encourages people to read to children. This annual event is held around the anniversary of the birthday of Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel).

"What better way to honor this children's author than to read to a child," Senator Farley said. "I always loved reading to my children and grandchildren. I read all the favorites and I never tire of it."

According to biographical information, Dr. Seuss was working to promote literacy in the 1950s, when he strung together 220 words into the now famous *The Cat in the Hat*. This was the first of his many popular children's books. Information about the author can be found at website www.seussville.com, and the Read Across America initiative can be found at the website www.nea.org/readacross

"Reading is a fun activity that opens the mind to all sorts of adventures," Senator Farley said. "As Chairman of the New York State Senate Select Committee on Libraries and a former teacher, I try to promote reading and learning as much as possible. Parents have a very important responsibility in their children's growth and education. Studies have shown that children whose families are involved in their learning become higher achievers and learn more quickly than children whose families are not. It's a big responsibility, but it's not difficult to help your children learn. The best way is to encourage them to read," Senator Farley said. "When children see their family members reading, writing and conversing, they naturally want to participate."

Senator Farley said at least 15 minutes a day of reading to children or encouraging other language activities could make a difference in a lifetime of learning. The following are more tips from Senator Farley:

- * Talking and singing to babies communicates security to them and stimulates their senses.
- * Showing interest in toddlers' babbling and having conversations with them encourages them to use words.
- * Pointing out the ordinary things parents and children see together - cars, animals, houses, trees - helps pre-schoolers recognize the link between objects and names.

- * Looking at picture books with youngsters and repeating the names of the pictures helps children memorize, which is an important step in learning.
- * Paying attention when children tell stories about what they see stimulates their verbal skills.
- * Allowing children to look at and handle books on their own fosters an interest in the written word.

Senator Farley strongly advises families to visit their local libraries with their children. "This can be a valuable experience to stimulate a desire to read and learn," he said. Many libraries host story hours for young children or summer reading programs for older children.

"It is important to encourage reading in a positive way, and not to assign it as a chore," Senator Farley said. "Turn off the television for several hours and set aside time for reading and discussing events of the day."