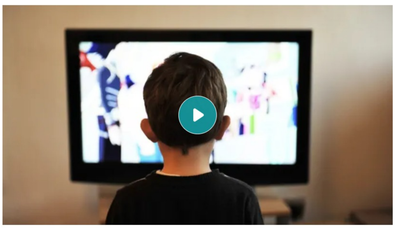
Celebrities including Stephen Fry and Sandi Toksvig join call for subtitles to be turned on for children's TV

EDUCATION | CHILDREN | STEPHEN FRY | PHILIP SCHOFIELD | Monday 1 March 2021, 7:55pm



- Video report by ITV News Midlands Correspondent Stacey Foster

Stephen Fry and Sandi Toksvig are among the celebrities to back a campaign arguing for subtitles to always be turned on to improve children's reading.

The group Turn on the Subtitles said research has shown having subtitles on when a child is watching television can double the chances of them becoming a good reader.

Mr Fry said: "The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has meant that some children have actually taken a step backwards, a leap backwards in literacy, which is a worry and a tragedy."

He said turning on the subtitles was free and took 10 seconds, and encouraged everyone to take part.

Philip Schofield, Sir Lenny Henry, Rachel Riley, Sanjeev Bhaskar and Sally Hawkins are among the celebrities to endorse the campaign.

The campaign argues subtitles should be turned on for all programmes aimed at children aged between six and 10.

A testimonial on their website by Sir Lenny said: "Just turn on the subtitles. Extraordinary. Research has shown they can double the chances of a child becoming good at reading."

The campaign's website claims there is a rich global body of evidence supporting their campaign.

They point to a study of 2,350 children where 34% became good readers with schooling alone. But, when exposed to 30 minutes a week of subtitled film songs, that proportion more than doubled to 70%.

They have also got the backing of Prime Minister Boris Johnson and former US President Bill Clinton.

Mr Johnson said "I think that the campaign is excellent" and said all departments that have a stake in children's education should look into it.

Turn on the Subtitles claims Netflix and Amazon are piloting permenent subtitles based on their campaign.

YouTube has also improved its subtitling on their children's platforms.

The campaign claims to be the world's biggest literacy project and is helping over 300 million children to learn to read.

- School staff not more at risk of Covid than average adult, study finds
- Free Covid tests for all pupils' families under plans to reopen schools

EDUCATION | CHILDREN | STEPHEN FRY | PHILIP SCHOFIELD

Related News

University told to pay student £5,000 for 'less valuable' educational experience
2 hours ago

School staff not more at risk of Covid than average adult, study finds
Yesterday

Free Covid tests for all pupils' families under plans to reopen schools
Yesterday

Domestic child abuse: How to get help in lockdown
4 days ago

PM insists new GCSE and A-level grading system is 'good compromise'
5 days ago

Covid tests and face masks 'not compulsory' at schools in England
5 days ago

How will students in England receive exam grades this summer?
5 days ago

Nearly 2m children in UK went short of food in 2020, report suggests
9 Dec 2020

Poor child nutrition 'could be reason behind 20cm height gap between nations'
6 Nov 2020

Stephen Fry's prostate cancer diagnosis 'caused spike in demand at NHS'
5 Sept 2018

Stephen Fry reveals prostate cancer diagnosis
23 Feb 2018

Stephen Fry 'faces blasphemy investigation'
7 May 2017

Philip Schofield meets Prince Philip in ITV documentary
12 Dec 2016

Phillip Schofield and Gordon the Gopher reunited
7 Aug 2015

Most popular

Meghan asks High Court to order Mail on Sunday to hand over letter to her father

Should joggers wear face masks? Expert sparks debate on outdoor exercising

Isle of Man to re-enter lockdown following 'unexplained' Covid cases

Top stories

Live: Hancock updates MPs on vaccine data as Covid deaths falling

Meghan asks High Court to order Mail on Sunday to hand over letter to her father

Covid: Furlough will be extended in the Budget, business secretary confirms

Delaying second Covid vaccine dose credited with saving 'large number of lives'

Liverpool FC legend Ian St John dies aged 82

Should joggers wear face masks? Expert sparks debate on outdoor exercising

Plan to celebrate Captain Sir Tom Moore's life revealed by his daughter

By using this site, you agree we can set and use cookies. For more details of these cookies and how to disable them, see our cookie policy.
© Copyright ITV plc 2020