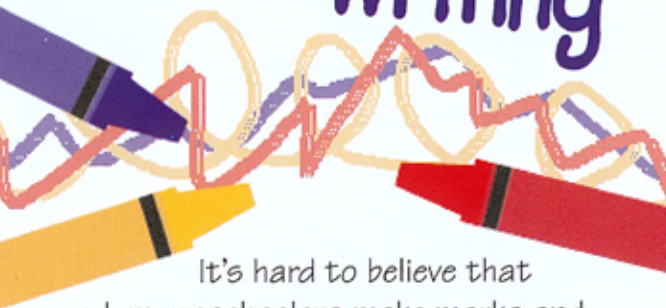


School Stuff

Preschoolers writing



It's hard to believe that when preschoolers make marks and scribbles on scraps of paper, they are actually learning to write. Any time children explore the materials and activities used in writing, they are laying the foundation for developing the skills that will later enable them to express themselves in print. To better prepare your child to be a writer, try the following tips.

- Provide your child with toys that relate to writing. These toys include matching games, magnetic alphabet letters, and chalkboards with chalk.
- When your child tells you about something that has happened, write down what she says. Reading her story back to her will help her to see the connections between spoken language and print.

- Help your child learn that both writing and written materials are important parts of everyday life. Give your child opportunities to see you read and write down recipes, read and respond to e-mail, and make and use a shopping list. Encourage your child to participate in these tasks as much as possible.
- Keep pencils, markers, crayons, and paper easily accessible to your child. Drawing, scribbling, tracing, and copying help develop the fine motor skills necessary for writing.
- Incorporate writing activities into playtime. Make lists, write checks, fill out forms, write up prescriptions, or take orders. Write your child's name on pictures that he draws.
- Provide your child with different types of paper for sorting and handling. Old blank forms, note pads, and junk mail give your child a wonderful connection to the adult world of written materials.

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