



# Helping your child to Write



## HELP YOUR CHILD TO WRITE

**Learning to write takes a long time and involves  
a number of skills**

### WRITING

Children need to have sufficient physical development of their preferred arm, hands and fingers to begin to be able to comfortably hold and move a pencil.

Learning about writing starts long before a child goes to school. Even very young children sometimes know the difference between writing and drawing. They watch adults writing and begin to understand that this print carries a message.

So....let your child/children watch you write and explain what and why you're writing.

**Notes,  
Shopping lists,  
Birthday cards,  
Filling in Forms,  
Letters,  
and so on.....**

However, before we even think about sharing writing with our children we should think about what else the children need to be able to do or understand that will help them learn to write when the time is right.



## TALK!

It is really important to begin the 'talk' habit as early in your child's life as possible. Talk about what you are doing throughout the day to help your child build up a wide range of words to try out for themselves.

Share books with your child as often as possible. Begin by talking about the pictures on the page and move on to singing the rhymes and reading the words to them.

Tell stories – remembering things from your own childhood such as fairy tales or favourite books and rhymes. Make up stories and encourage the children to join in by taking it in turns to add a little bit to the story.



Listen to stories together – there are lots of stories on CD available in the shops and at your local library.

Singing nursery rhymes and songs that encourage them to join in as part of every day routines – while changing nappies, bath time etc.

Talking is the most important thing that children need to be able to do – they will find it hard to learn to write if they can not talk about things first.



## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A visit to the park or the garden is very important to help your child learn the early skills needed for writing. There will be lots of opportunities to talk and introduce new words. There are lots of physical activities on offer in a park that will help your child to develop the larger muscles of the body that are needed before children start to think about holding pencils and writing:

**Climbing,  
Swinging,  
Using arms when balancing,  
Throwing and catching, and so on....**

Encourage your child to play with toys that develop their manipulative skills:

**Construction Toys – Lego etc,  
Play People, Farm Animals,  
Playdough,  
Bead Threading,  
Jigsaw Puzzles, and so on .....**

The most important part of sharing 'Talk' and 'Physical' play with your child/children is having

**FUN**

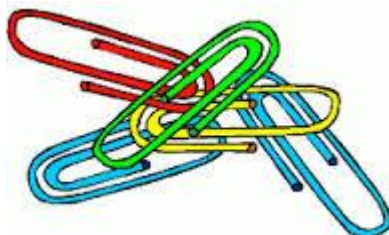
## WRITING

Once children have begun to make marks in things such as shaving foam or jelly, let them 'write' birthday cards to friends or family. This 'writing' will probably be made up of dots, squiggles, circles and lines and is what they see as writing. Let the children pretend to write as often as possible and praise them at all times. Put their efforts up on walls, fridges and doors and make it special!!



### What materials to use with your child/children?

- ❖ Lots of paper to make marks/write on in a variety of colours and shapes, cards, post it notes, forms, envelopes, note books – the list is endless.
- ❖ A variety of exciting and interesting pens, pencils, crayons.
- ❖ Scissors, glue, tape.
- ❖ Hole punches, paper clips, staplers.
- ❖ Used stamps to stick on envelopes.



## SOME DON'TS!!

**Don't** force your child to copy your writing or trace over letters. It won't mean anything and may put your child off writing before they even get started.

**Don't** worry if your child writes letters incorrectly. They will learn in time – just let them keep watching you.

**Don't** spend a fortune on workbooks for your child. Find fun, exciting reasons for writing.

**Don't** worry if you're not as good at spelling – it's more important to just have a go!

**DO** help your child to become an independent, confident and happy writer with lots of encouragement to experiment and have a go.



**PHYSICAL SKILLS CHILDREN NEED TO DEVELOP BEFORE  
THEY CAN BEGIN TO WRITE**

<b><u>Skills</u></b>	<b><u>Activities to Develop the Skill</u></b>
Open and close hands one at a time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Throwing and catching different size balls, bean bags etc</li> <li>❖ Using plasticine, playdough and clay</li> <li>❖ Wet sand play</li> <li>❖ Picking up objects of increasing weight</li> <li>❖ Squeezing activities</li> </ul>
Touch each finger with the thumb of the same hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Tearing tissue paper etc</li> <li>❖ Using finger rhymes, finger puppets</li> <li>❖ Printing</li> <li>❖ Threading large and small beads</li> <li>❖ Fastening buttons, zips, press studs, velcro, belts</li> <li>❖ Using peg boards</li> </ul>
Roll each wrist in turn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Rolling out dough, plasticine, clay</li> <li>❖ Stirring with a large spoon</li> <li>❖ Turning with a skipping rope</li> <li>❖ Brushing a doll's hair</li> <li>❖ Whisking soap suds</li> <li>❖ Twirling a hoop</li> <li>❖ Shaking a die or tambourine</li> <li>❖ Undoing a screw top jar</li> <li>❖ Using a screwdriver</li> <li>❖ Playing with construction toys and nuts and bolts</li> </ul>
Thread large beads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Threading cardboard tubes onto a rope or stick</li> <li>❖ Putting rings or quoits of various sizes onto a peg</li> <li>❖ Using large lacing cards</li> <li>❖ Hanging clothes on pegs</li> </ul>
Pick up square bricks and make a Tower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Using Duplo</li> <li>❖ Posting shapes into a letterbox</li> <li>❖ Doing simple jigsaw puzzles</li> <li>❖ Balancing big bricks</li> <li>❖ Stacking beakers</li> </ul>
Hand and eye co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Picking up objects with tweezers and eye droppers</li> <li>❖ Finger rhymes</li> <li>❖ Spray bottles/washing up liquid bottles filled with water</li> <li>❖ Using a variety of glue sticks and brushes</li> <li>❖ Icing cakes and biscuits</li> </ul>