

Information for parents

Developing initial writing skills in children

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Reading and writing are very closely connected. Some of the things parents can do to support the development of their child's writing skills at home in a similar manner to developing a love of reading are outlined below:

- Provide your child with lots of writing materials. Encourage him or her to do lots of painting using his or her fingers and different types of brushes. Remember to have brushes with short handles, as they are easier to hold and to manipulate. Small roller brushes from the local hardware store can also be purchased. Wooden handled pastry brushes can even be used to help Mummy glaze the pastry.
- Allow your child to see you writing and talk about why you are writing. "Mummy is going to the shops. I am writing a list of all the things I want to buy. Can you think of anything we may need?" "Daddy is writing a card to his sister because it is her birthday next week. Do you want to send a drawing or write your name on the card?"
- Encourage your child to use many different types of writing materials. Most large department stores and newsagents have a wide selection of writing materials and implements. These include textas, chalk, crayons, pastels, coloured pencils and lead pencils. Use thicker writing implements if your child has not yet commenced school as these give your child more control over the paper.
- When your child has done a drawing encourage him or her to tell you about what has been drawn. You could print or write what he or she tells you about the drawing on the paper. It is also a good idea to date drawings and put the child's name on it if you have more than one child. Children often like to look back at what they have drawn when they were younger.
- If you have access to a laminating machine, drawings and paintings can be laminated and used as presents for family and friends, or as place mats at mealtimes.
- Give your child a photo album and allow him or her to take photos, put them in his or her album and then name the people in the photo, when the photo was taken and the date the event occurred.
- Encourage your child to write on a variety of different surfaces. These could include paper, cardboard, newspaper, a whiteboard, a blackboard, and even the sand if he or she is at the beach.
- Give your child some stationery and encourage him or her to write to friends, grandparents and other people in his or her life. Let him or her address the envelope and go with you to the Post Office to buy a stamp and post the letter.
- Give your child the opportunity to write poems and stories and then to illustrate them. The finished item could be laminated and sent as a gift, taped to the door of the fridge or used as a placemat for family meals.
- Give your child a diary or a small notebook and encourage him or her to write or draw in it each night about what he or she has done during the day.

For more Information

If you require further information please contact:

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