

# Parents' Guide to Early Literacy Development

## Early Writing Development



The very first marks children make on paper are the beginnings of their journey towards becoming a writer.

Children learn a great deal about writing long before they start to learn to write properly. They start to learn when they see people write for a purpose. Often young children want to imitate this by “writing” themselves. This role play should be accepted and encouraged.



When you read to a child, look at the print in the environment, the backs of cereal packets, food items, street names, birthday cards, labels, comics, newspapers, magazines, road signs etc, you are helping your child to understand the purpose of reading and writing.

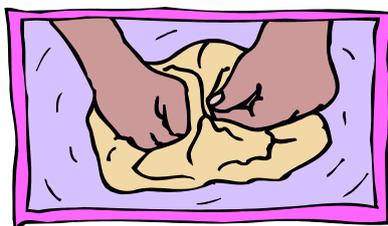
When you write a shopping list, a letter, fill in a form, write down a telephone message, sign a greetings card, encourage your child to watch, explaining to him/her what and why you are writing. Discuss with them who will read it and what it will mean to that reader.



Encourage your child to imitate writing by:

- Providing writing materials, pencils, crayons, paper etc
- Make use of all that junk mail by giving it to your child to write on
- Give your child a purpose for writing by asking them to sign a birthday card, write a shopping list, a reminder note, a message, a recipe, a form to fill in etc
- Make small books with your child recording a special event, a birthday celebration, a holiday or a special day out.
- Label your child's pictures and drawing,
- During imaginative play activities, look out for opportunities for your child to write. For example, during hospital play, a child may write prescriptions, during house play a shopping list etc.
- Surprise your child by leaving short notes around the house and invite him/her to reply

When children are familiar with and can recognise their names, they may wish to attempt to copy write them.



Your child needs to develop good fine motor control in order to work the muscles of the fingers and hand in the correct way. You can help by encouraging fine motor control and co-ordination by providing building and construction toys, jigsaw puzzles, shape sorters, play dough or plasticine, scissors etc.

- Show your child how to hold a pencil correctly.
- Encourage tracing or copying shapes, writing patterns, etc before copying letters
- Children need to scribble in order to learn to write just as babies need to babble before they learn to talk
- Encourage your child to draw in order to develop his /her hand and eye coordination



**But most of all, your child needs you to spend time with him/her. Your encouragement and praise are vital to all aspects of development.**

*For further information and ideas, please contact Nursery staff, or Tricia Di Duca (Home Link Teacher)*