

Activities to Support Your Child's Writing Development

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Writing is a vital part of early literacy development. Even in their earliest years, children engage in writing during everyday activities through drawing, mark making, and letter-like forms. These activities develop key literacy skills. Writing also helps children learn that they have a voice and can share their ideas.

Families can support children's writing development in several fun and meaningful ways. For preschool children, consider these activities:

Provide Writing Materials

Make sure your child has access to a variety of paper and writing tools (markers, crayons, pencils, magnetic letters, chalk, paint). Over time, expect to see drawing, scribbling, and letter-like forms. Eventually, your child will start to write letters based on the sounds they hear (like writing JOC for *juice*). Observe what they do, and offer guidance if they need help organizing thoughts and materials.

Write with Your Child

Try this with different kinds of texts, such as to-do lists, notes to family members, and stories. Invite children to compose their own texts, and ask them to read you what they've written. Also, show and talk about the writing you do for everyday tasks. If your child has a longer story or message to share, you can write down their words. They'll start to see how writing works and try it on their own.

Encourage Writing During Play

Children often look for ways to use writing in their play, such as taking orders while playing restaurant or making lists for a pretend trip to the store. To support these efforts, make sure that writing materials are near your children's play areas and when you're on the go.

Listen to and Display Your Child's Writing

Sharing stories is a meaningful part of the writing experience. Set aside time to listen to and interact with what your child has written. Pay attention to the writing they do during other times of the day too (labeling a container in the kitchen, creating instructions for a new game). Display what they have written, and notice together how their writing changes over time.

Pair Writing with Drawing

Ask your child to illustrate their creations. This helps them start to understand the meaning behind the words and symbols they write down.

As your child's fine motor skills and stamina improve, you may notice them writing for longer periods, adding more detail to illustrations, and producing increasingly legible writing. Encourage exploration, and don't worry about neatly formed letters. (That can be the focus once they've entered formal schooling.) Soon they will begin to use richer vocabulary and more complex sentence structures to narrate their stories—all while gaining confidence as gifted writers!

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This message is meant to be printed out, photocopied, and sent home with children as a resource for families! It is available at [NAEYC.org/activities-to-support-writing-development](https://naeyc.org/activities-to-support-writing-development).

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