

Even more ideas

For you to do alongside your child and join in:

- Making cards for special occasions
- Making books
- Writing letters, messages
- Playing office, post office, doctors, vets, the list is endless for playing with writing
- Labelling, for instance plants in the garden, toys in the toy shop
- Invitations to tea or a party, real or pretend

Your child is just beginning to write and will watch and copy you. Remember it should be fun.

Families at Play

Families at Play is a series of information leaflets that offer enjoyable and exciting activities for you and your child to do together.

Other leaflets available in the Families at Play series:

Physical Activity over 2's

Physical Activity under 2's

Messy Play over 2's

Messy Play under 2's

Water Play over 2's

Water Play under 2's

Sound and Music over 2's

Sound and Music under 2's

Mark Making over 2's

Mark Making under 2's

Playdough over 2's

Exploring under 2's

Small World over 2's

Pretend Play under 2's

Mark Making

over 2's



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Improvement Team



Why is mark making important?

Children begin their journey towards writing by making marks with pens, pencils and other mark making equipment.

Even earlier than this, fingers can make satisfying marks, for instance using paint, sand, shaving foam.

Through making marks children learn to express themselves and communicate in another way. The marks children make slowly begin to have more meaning for them.

At first mark making is a blend of drawing and writing, as children are keen to use their new skills. Most children begin to understand the difference between drawing and writing at around 3 years of age.



How will this help my child?

For some young children learning to hold and control a pencil, pen or paintbrush can be a challenge.

They must first build up the muscles and control in their arms and hands. This is developed naturally through other sorts of play, for example throwing balls, climbing up a slide, using playdough and many more.

The early marks children make are usually big circular marks and straight lines. This type of mark making is sometimes dismissed as scribble however this is your child trying out new things to see what happens. By experimenting with making marks your child will be on their way to becoming a writer.



What will we do?

When your child's grip has developed, give them large, chunky crayons, chinks, washable felt tips and an endless supply of paper. Do not worry about buying paper as young children will be happy with rolls of old wallpaper and scraps.

Try mark making outdoors-use large paper and chinks on patio, walls and paths. They wash off and do not leave any permanent damage. You could use water and a large brush on walls and paths.

Children will want to act out 'writing' situations that they have seen. Try to encourage this and don't dismiss it as pretend writing as it is an important stage. Encourage them to write for a purpose, for example to make a shopping list like mummy/daddy.

