



ENGAGING FAMILIES

Families play a big part in supporting children’s learning during routines and play at home. Communicating with and forming partnerships with families is key to making this happen. Here are some ways to form family partnerships using emergent writing.

- **Set up a messaging or mail system between parent and home visitor.** Children and parents can write messages to you. Messages might include important family events, such as upcoming birthdays, a new family member or pet, or holiday travel.
- **Write cards and invitations.** Encourage parents to take time with their child to write cards for friends or relatives—whether a get-well card or just to say hello. They can also create invitations to family events, such as grandma’s birthday, or announce a new family member or pet. Their child can decide what to write, what it looks like, and how to deliver it.
- **Story reviews.** In a notebook or book made from folded paper, write prompts or questions for parents to ask children after they read a book together. For example, “What was your favorite part of the book? Who was your favorite character? Why? Is there anything you would change about the story if you could?”
- **Imaginary pet.** Have parents and children choose their favorite stuffed animal. Ask the parent and child to write about what adventures happened between home visits. They can include drawings. Help to put the stories together in a book so that children can revisit these adventures.



Note: Work with families to find appropriate writing tools such as chunky markers, crayons, and pencils. For families worried about young children making a mess, suggest washable writing tools to help reduce clean-up.

