



EMERGENT WRITING AT HOME

Emergent writing, children's attempts at written communication, is a great way for children to use their imagination and practice new skills. Children may not be able to write words and sentences, but even making marks on paper is a part of emergent writing. Try this activity at home with your child to support emergent writing. Remember, children write, draw, and scribble at different ages. Focus on the process—have fun together! Don't worry too much about the result.

Read stories to your children or tell them a story about your childhood. At the end of the story, ask your child to tell you write about what happens next.

- Have your children to pick their favorite part of the story and ask what happens next. Encourage your children to write the next part of the story (even if they can't formally write).
- Have your children draw a picture to go with their writing. Drawing is the earliest form of writing for children! Plus, it can help them (and you) remember what they wrote.

Label things in your house.

- Have your children help you write labels that have meaning or give directions. For example, label the hooks where you hang your coats with the names of each family member or label toy bins to help sort toys when cleaning up.

Make a family scrapbook.

- Look at photos together and ask your children what is happening in the photo. Ask them to write down what is happening in the photo or guess what happened after the photo was taken.
- If your children are in Head Start or child care, bring a photo to share! This helps the teacher or caregiver get to know your child and family better. It may inspire other families to do the same.

Keep a daily or weekly diary.

- Take a few moments at the end of the day or week to write down some interesting things or draw a picture of what happened that day. It doesn't have to be long—the point is for you and your children to write together.

Write cards or invitations to events.

- Take time with your children to write cards for friends or relatives. You can also create invitations to family events, whether they are invitations for grandma's birthday or announcing a new family member or pet. Have your child decide what to say, what it should look like, and how to deliver it.

Write a grocery, to-do, or favorite things list.

- Work together to write the family grocery or to-do list, encouraging your children to draw pictures to help them remember what their writing says. Ask them to check off the items or tasks later.
- Encourage children to write a list of their favorite toys, books, games or songs. This builds on their interests while helping them develop their writing skills.

Remember: Your child's writing may be drawings, scribbled writing, random letters, or your child may be writing letters for some of the sounds he hears. These are all important steps on the path to writing! It's okay if your child's writing isn't perfect—it's a learning process.

