



WHAT IS EMERGENT WRITING?

Emergent writing is children's first attempts at written communication. This could include random marks on a piece of paper, finger marks in sand, or a long string of letters. Children as young as two begin to understand that writing has meaning and communicates ideas!

- Writing is more than writing letters, correct spelling, and punctuation (although these skills will be important eventually). For young children, writing is to communicate ideas, share memories, and tell stories. Children will make errors when writing. You don't need to correct every error your children make—pick one or two to help them fix consistently. Focus instead on listening to your children talk about what they are trying to write and ask follow-up questions to keep the conversation and writing going.
- Invented spelling is OK! When children use their knowledge of letters and letter sounds to try and spell the word, they are showing you that they know the relationship between letters and sounds, which is an important school readiness skill. Don't worry about correcting their spelling. Instead write what they are trying to spell (maybe under their sentence) to provide a model of correct spelling.
- Scribbles and drawing are part of learning how to write. Encourage your children by asking them to tell you what they are writing. You can even offer to help write a particular letter, spell something out, or write familiar words.
- Point out print wherever you are. Whether you are at the grocery store or park, pointing out print helps you child see how words, letters, and phrases have shared meaning. For example, you can point out the word “stop” on a stop sign and talk about the shape of the sign.

