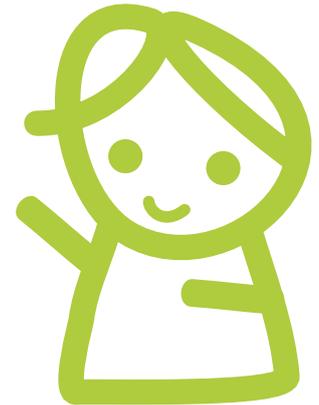


Mark Making in the Early Years



Children need to be provided with plenty of gross and fine motor skills opportunities in order to be able to write. Their physical development is essential but also the way we encourage them to make marks must be attractive and fun. Remember that mark making is the first step towards writing.



- Eating is often one of the first experiences children have to explore textures and create marks with food or drinks. Allow your child to play with food such as yoghurt, jelly and cereal. Make sure you supervise your child at all times and be aware of allergies.
- Promote play using their fingers and noticing how marks appear on the surfaces by making use of thick chinks, crayons, finger-paints, shaving foam or even water.

- As they are getting older, introduce thick pens, colouring pencils, glittery pens, brushes, stamps, sponges and all sorts of equipment. Add glue, small pieces of paper or material to create collages.
- Help them to strengthen their skills by offering activities such as: stickers, puzzles, threading, sand modeling, play-dough and with your support some cutting.
- It is important that children are surrounded with joy and enthusiasm when doing these activities. Join in and become keen on exploring tasks with them, which will end up inspiring your child.
- Use real life objects, signs and labels as opportunities to learn about letters. Point at them spontaneously and follow their interest.
- Draw on the floor (perhaps on the street in front of your house if possible!) and use chalks to trace lines, circles and all sorts of shapes. Enjoy!
- Carry a notepad and a few crayons for them to be able to draw whenever they feel like such as on a train, on a plane, on the car, at the park, waiting for an appointment and everywhere.



Children usually engage in mark making activities from own initiative. Allow them to spend time on developing the skills that are needed to make a good start into writing.

“Children learn more from what you are than what you teach”

W. E. B. DuBois