

It's never too early to build writing skills!



Reading and writing are closely connected skills. When one is strong, it supports the other. So, to prepare your child for reading, it's helpful to also focus on writing. Here's how:

- **Start by talking.** Talking to children builds vocabulary. Having a large vocabulary helps kids write everything from school reports to personal letters.
- **Make up stories** with your child. Write them down and ask your child to illustrate and sign them.
- **Encourage writing.** Provide plenty of paper (lined and unlined) and things to write with, such as pencils, paint, chalk and crayons. Don't worry if you can't read what your child has "written." Simply ask what it says.



- **Strengthen fine motor skills.** Your child could thread and lace a shoe, or roll play dough with a rolling pin. Draw several shapes on paper and ask your child to use safety scissors to follow the lines and cut shapes out.
- **Help your child form letters** with different materials, such as cooked spaghetti, cookie dough and clay. Practice spelling familiar words, such as your child's name or *Mom*.