

HANDWRITING DEVELOPMENT

1. Neurological Development is Crucial
 - a. Developmentally we need to make sure children have been given the opportunities to reach most developmental milestones necessary for writing words and sentences
 - i. Before gripping a pencil correctly, can they:
 1. String beads
 2. manipulate playdough/clay correctly
 3. Lace cards
 4. Use appropriate grasp patterns to open/close containers and “pinch” open small items such as tweezers, clips, clothes pins
 5. Use scissors correctly to snip paper, cut lines and eventually cut Pictures
 - ii. Before writing words and sentences can they:
 1. Draw straight lines (horizontal, vertical) = age 2.5 -3 years
 2. Draw single circles (not scribbling over and over in circular motion) = age 3
 3. Draw simple shapes:
 - a. circle (3 years)
 - b. cross (3.5 years)
 - c. square (4 years)
 - d. triangle (5 years)
 - e. diamond (6 years)
 - i. Note: forming diagonal lines are an important developmental milestone (crossing the midline). Without crossing the midline appropriately letters like: A, M, N, R, V, W, X, Y, Z will never be formed correctly
 4. Discriminate between left, right, up and down (*always starting at the left and top of letters, drawings, and other art projects*)
 5. Cross the midline:
 - a. Draw + age appropriately
 - b. Skipping
 - c. Shoe tying
 6. Isolate wrist movement from arm/shoulder movement
 - a. Have them lie on tummies and use elbows for support while coloring/drawing
 - b. Practice drawing shapes and letters on dry erase boards – writing in a vertical plane rather than horizontal plane increases wrist movement
 7. Sit appropriately at desk/table

- a. Make sure they are able to sit on bottoms and have feet flat on floor when sitting at desk and tables.
8. Are they using age appropriate grasp?
 - a. Use shorter crayons & pencils – this way they have less room for extra fingers

Items Used in Fine Motor kits:

Small Pop Beads

Green theraputty

Tongs/Strawberry huller

Clothes Pins

Lacing Cord

Wooden ornaments to place clothespins on/any cardboard

Alphabet wooden beads for stringing

Nuts/bolts

<http://www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/pencil-grasp-development.html>

<http://www.therapiststreetforkids.com/PreWritingSkills.html>

http://www2.ccsd.ws/k4/ot/handwriting_activities.htm

<http://teachtrainlove.com/20-brain-break-clips-fight-the-fidgeting/>