

Building Blocks of Writing Readiness



Hand and Finger Strength
Crossing the Mid-Line
Pencil Grasp
Hand-Eye Coordination
Bilateral Integration
Upper Body Strength
Object Manipulation
Visual Perception
Hand Dominance
Hand Division

What is the Mid-Line?

The mid-line is an imaginary line down the center of the body dividing the body into left and right.

Crossing the mid-line allows a child to complete tasks such as:

- Drawing a horizontal line across a page without having to switch hands in the middle.
- Sitting cross-legged on the floor.
- Completing a puzzle by placing a piece on the right side of the puzzle when the puzzle piece is located on the left hand side of the body.
- Reaching across the body toward a foot to put a shoe or a sock on.
- Hitting a ball with a bat.

Difficulty crossing the mid-line makes writing and visual tracking from left to right much more difficult. Both skills are integral to learning success in school.



Making a Mark In Their World

**Writing Development
In Toddlers and Preschoolers**

“Creativity is a bridge to learning. Creativity helps your child become a thoughtful, inquisitive, and confident learner later on.

-zerotothree.org

Stages

Stage 1: Random Scribbling

At this stage, children are just beginning to understand that their crayon markings on paper are the result of their own movements from their shoulders, arms, and wrists.

Stage 2: Controlled Scribbling

As a result of better controlled muscle movements in their hands, children begin to make more controlled marks on the page- vertical lines, horizontal lines, and circle shapes.

Stage 3: Lines and Patterns

Toddlers begin to realize that the marks they make on paper carry meaning. They begin to imitate print around them by drawing lines, dots, and curves like they see in *adult writing* of letters and words.

Stage 4: Pictures of Objects or People

Children begin to understand that the lines they are drawing can be symbols or something else like a sun, dog, or a person. They begin to understand the difference between pictures and writing.

Stage 5: Letter and Word Practice

Children begin to experiment with letters in their own name because these are the letters that are most familiar to them. They write *pretend letters* too by copying other familiar letter shapes.

Stages of Writing Development

Random Scribbling

(15 mo. to 2 ½ years)

Controlled Scribbling

(2 years to 3 years)

Lines and Patterns

(2 ½ years to 3 ½ years)

Pictures of Objects or People

(3 years to 5 years)

Letter and Word Practice

(3 years to 5 years)



For young children, art and writing are one and the same.

- Art can be a regular part of playtime- offer chunky, easy to grasp crayons, thick pencils, and washable crayons.
- Allow your child to experiment and explore- no need for instructions or *how-to* drawing.
- The process is the focus, not the product. *Tell me about your picture. Look at the lines you are making!*
- Encourage your child's attempts at writing. Take the *scribbles* to the grocery store and ask your child to pick out what is on his *list*.
- Display your child's artwork and writing.