

## Printing Warm-up Ideas

Let's quickly explore some of the most important skills that children develop before they successfully master printing skills.

Children learn through play. Through active games, they learn how to move and to coordinate their body parts. They also develop strength and endurance. Later, this large muscle development allows children to develop good sitting posture at a desk.

When children play with toys that require take-apart skills, filling containers, building and putting objects together, they begin to develop muscle control in their arms and hands. They also start to learn size, shape and object relationship skills. Eye-hand coordination skills, general attention, and concentration, and attention to detail are all skills that develop.

When children have learned these essential skills, they are ready to be introduced to crayons.

### **WHERE SHOULD CHILDREN COLOUR?**

Sitting on a chair, feet flat on the floor, back well supported, table height an inch or two above their elbow height. This position will provide good stability.

Standing at an easel (or tape paper to a wall or the fridge—paper being at shoulder height). This will help to develop shoulder and wrist muscles and encourage pencil grasp skills.

Lying on tummy on the floor. This will help to develop neck, back, and shoulder muscles for good sitting posture and improved pencil control.

Side-sitting on the floor

*If you have any questions, please contact your Occupational Therapist.*

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## MATERIALS (Try them all)

Crayons. Large and small. Some are scented. Some sparkle. Choose something that your child will want to play with.

Paints.

Chalkboard and sidewalk chalk.

Markers.

Plain paper allows your child to be creative. They learn to experiment with lines, shapes and colour.

Pictures, stencils, and colouring books. Children develop eye-hand coordination skills by tracing around pictures, stencils, and colouring within the lines. They begin to learn a sense of colour.

## HOW WE LEARN

We learn by imitating, copying, and experimentation.

## HELP CHILDREN MASTER PRE-PRINTING SKILLS

Sit with children when they are learning. As children watch, making scribbling marks. Have them copy.

When successful, repeat with horizontal, vertical and circular scribbling until mastered.

Demonstrate how to make a horizontal line. Have children copy.

Show children a horizontal line (don't let them watch you make it). Have them copy.

Repeat the last three (3) steps with vertical lines, a circle, a "plus sign", diagonal lines, squares, "X" triangles and diamonds.

Show children how shapes can be combined to make pictures.

Encourage children to draw.