



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**  
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**  
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**  
Program Topic : **Emergent Writing (LOVE)**

#### **Guidelines to the presenter**

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

#### **Topic:**

**Emergent Writing**

#### **Objectives:**

- Promote environments conducive to learning pre-writing skills
- Develop understanding of the importance of modeling writing
- Encourage activities that support the development of writing in a fun and enjoyable way
- Encourage parents to create special writing activity boxes for their children to use
- Promote engagement with writing and drawing from a young age without pressure

## Introduction

On this show, we celebrate the fact that you are the most important person in your child' life. You have the power to give your child the best possible start in life and it doesn't have to cost you a cent.

Emergent writing is the same as pre-writing. It is the process of children learning to develop writing skills. This happens over time at different paces. As young children experience books, and see you writing, they begin to understand that written works have meaning and start to want to learn how to do this too. Before they can learn to write in a way that can be understood, they need to develop their pre-writing skills.

It is important that we encourage this and build a home that is conducive to writing development by ensuring that children have access to a variety of writing materials

| Questions   | Facts/Information  |
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| <p>1. <i>What is the process of emergent writing development?</i></p> | <p>Children first learn to hold pencil or pen and to make scribbles, lines, dots and squiggles. They then begin to make marks that look like letters. Slowly they become interested in copying words and letters (often their name first) and ask adults to write and spell our words. Eventually they begin to sound and spell words on their own. Children are usually most interested in the letters of their own names and these are usually the first letters that they recognise and write. Remember that writing is a messy process – it takes a long time before children are able to write well and all their early creations and efforts should be supported and</p> |

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| <p>2. <i>Is drawing and art linked to learning to write?</i></p> | <p>celebrated as this positive reinforcement is more important than getting it right in the beginning.</p> <p>For young children art and early writing skills are one and the same. At first, it's all about just figuring out what these cool things called crayons can do. Then your child discovers the link between her hand holding the crayon and the line she made on the page: Presto! She experiences the power of cause-and-effect. Imagine how exciting this must be for her! She can now make a real "mark" on the world. This leap in thinking skills is helped along by her new ability to hold things in her hands and fingers. The growing control your child has over the muscles in her hands lets her move a marker or paintbrush with purpose and with a goal in mind.</p> |
| <p>3. <i>When do children start drawing pictures?</i></p>        | <p>As mentioned above children start with random scribbling, this then moves to more controlled scribbling and by the time they are between 3 and 5 they are starting to draw pictures of objects and people. Once your child has begun to purposefully draw images, she has mastered symbolic thinking. This important milestone in</p>   |

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| <p>4. <i>How can you create an environment that encourages writing?</i></p> | <p>thinking skills means that your child understands that lines on paper can be a symbol of something else, like a house, a cat or a person. At this stage, your child also begins to understand the difference between pictures and writing. So you may see him draw a picture and then scribble some "words" underneath to describe what he has drawn or to tell a story. When your child is able to share his story with you, he will be motivated to "author" more and more work as he grows.</p> <p>There are many things children can do to encourage their child's interest in writing. For example put together a writing box that children can explore and use on their own, provide children with a flat writing surface (like a small table, a strong box, a flat piece of wood or a sand tray), provide them with opportunities to strengthen their fingers and thumb and show your interest in writing by letting them see you writing every day, talking about what you are writing and handling your writing materials with respect and care. It is important also to make lots of time for drawing and art and telling the stories of what they draw.</p> |
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| <p>5. <i>What do you mean by a writing box?</i></p>   | <p>A writing box is just a special box that children can explore and use on their own that contains different writing materials. For example crayons, pencils, kokis, paint, cardboard, scrap paper for drawing, pictures of letters and numbers, paint brushes etc. If you don't have a lot of resources, just using an old cardboard box, decorating it and adding a few of the above, will make it special for you child.</p> |
| <p>6. <i>And what about a sand tray what is that and how do you use it?</i></p>   | <p>You can make a sand tray with an old beer tray. Tape up the sides with masking tape, decorate the outsides with tearings from old magazines, and then fill the box with clean sand. Children can then use it to draw pictures or write words or numbers. Spend time talking to your child about what they draw in the sand.</p>   |
| <p>7. <i>You mention the need to provide opportunities for children to strengthen their fingers and thumbs? Why and how do you do this?</i></p> | <p>Yes children need to be able to hold a pencil and have the strength in their hand and fingers and fine motor skills to do so properly. You can help them develop this by asking them to help you sort and pick up small objects( such as beads or beans), collecting small natural objects( like sticks and leaves), pinching and pulling play dough, drawing with their fingers in the</p>                                   |

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| <p>8. <i>What else can parents do to encourage the development of writing skills?</i></p> <p>9. <i>What if your child is not interested in writing?</i></p> | <p>sane, tearing paper into small pieces and crumpling paper in one hand. Other examples are: Writing/drawing on vertical surfaces (easels, paper on walls, etc.) helps children position their hands better</p> <p>Popping bubble wrap with their fingers.</p> <p>Squeezing spray bottles, squirt water/bath toys</p> <p>Learning pre-writing skills is a process which takes place over a long period of time and at the child's own pace. To help children development their writing parents and caregivers need to provide babies and toddlers with lots of opportunities and a variety of materials to experiment and practice. For example encourage them to look at and touch letters, point out letters in your neighbourhood, get them to trace letters with their fingers, make them name cards (stickers) for common things in your home – however DO NOT FORCE children to practice writing in a formal way. This early stage of writing development must be fun and enjoyable.</p> <p>The most important thing you can do as a parent is to make it fun and enjoyable and to keep the pressure off. Don't stress out if</p> |
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| <p><i>10. So how do you keep it fun? Are there games you can recommend to parents to keep it fun?</i></p> | <p>your child isn't interested in writing.</p> <p>To raise a writer, give your child every opportunity to put pen to paper, chalk to sidewalk, paint to easel, and marker to poster board, but make sure it's all in fun. Your preschooler is just beginning to understand how words are used to convey thoughts, and is still developing the fine motor skills needed to form letters. Your goal, at this stage, is to encourage her so she'll realize that writing is an activity with its own unique rewards.</p> <p>There are a number of fun games and activities that parents can set up with their children to encourage pre-writing. Here are some:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write simple notes to your child. For example, write "I love you" or "Let's take a walk." Your child can "write" notes back to you using words or pictures. Take turns reading the notes to each other.</li><li>• Shopping Lists - Write shopping lists and to-do lists while sitting next to your child. Provide paper and pencil so the child can make his or her own list. Then, take the list to the shop and use it as you shop to show the</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>words on your list have meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picture Menus - With your child, cut out pictures of food and paste them on sheets of paper to make a menu. You might make pages for breakfast, lunch, and foods. Have your child “read” the menu.</li> <li>• Encourage your children to “sign” their name on their drawings/art projects. Even if this begins as scribble, children learn that they can write something that represents their name. Later your child will write the initials of his/her first and last name and then the complete name.</li> <li>• Give your child plenty of opportunities to draw and write. Talk to your child about what he/she draws, ask questions and respond to what your child says or make up a story to go with the drawing.</li> </ul> |
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**Conclusion**

Children need to build fine motor skills to support writing development. So remember to expose your child to varied, fun writing activities. Writing is a messy process so don't pressurize your child to develop fast or be a perfect writer, this takes times. Be sure to celebrate all their achievements and development.

## Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Be motivated to create environments conducive to learning pre-writing skills
- Understand the importance of modeling writing and introducing activities.
- Support the development of writing in a fun and enjoyable way
- Know about creating a special writing activity boxes for their children to use
- Be aware of and encourage engagement with writing and drawing from a young age **without pressure**
- Know to recognize and celebrate their children's messy writing beginnings