

## Small Muscles, BIG Jobs

### Gaining control over a pencil or crayon will help your child:

- Strengthen the small muscles in his hand
- Focus the eyes and the hands to work together
- Begin to draw shapes and write letters in his name

### Ideas to try with your child:

- Draw shapes with your child using crayons. Talk about the shape as you draw. “A triangle has 3 corners like this.” “A circle goes around.” Invite him to practice drawing.
- Let your child help you write the grocery list using pencil and paper. Let him make marks to indicate the items. If he asks, write down the word for him to copy.
- Use chalk on a chalkboard or out on the sidewalk. Spell out your child’s name “J-o-s-e” using both capital and lower case letters.
- Make a rainbow name! Write your child’s name in black and have him trace over it with many different colors.

### If your child is struggling:

- Put a small amount of sand or sugar on a tray. Encourage your child to write the letters of his name in the sand.
- Fill up one small bowl with water and let your child use a turkey baster to transfer the water from bowl to bowl.

### Going further:

- Purchase some stencils from the dollar store and help your child trace around them with colored pencils.
- Hint: Using a pencil requires more pressure and arm control than using a marker. Make sure your child has a variety of materials to draw and write with.



The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 3-4 years** that parents can help improve at home.

Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: “Draw some shapes and lines using a crayon or pencil” *Touching, Seeing, Hearing and Moving Around, Ages-3-4 years*, pg. 60