Preparing Your Child for the “Write” Start in Kindergarten

C:\Users\ggreene\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\T8UA0OO5\MC900071179[1].wmfStarting kindergarten is a big but exciting transitition in a child’s life. Handwriting will be an everyday part of the kindergarten day. Helping your child learn to hold their pencil correctly and having their body ready to work will be an important part of being ready to write, however; if you take some steps to prepare your child for this new experience, you can ease some of the anxiety, and get your child’s schooling off to a great start!

**Use Crafts to Improve Your Child’s Pencil Grip** Let your child roll and mold play-dough, tear up newspapers for a papier-mache project, string beads, and make finger puppets. These fun activities will improve the way students’ hold their pencil. We will strive to see the pencil held with the index and thumb and supported behind by the third finger in a tripod grip.

**Give Scissors a Workout** “Don’t run with Scissors!” As important as it is to teach your kid this rule, it’s also a good idea to show them how to hold and use scissors safely. Build up dexterity by showing how to cut through junk mail and carve through play-dough.

**Sharpen the Sense** Interactive clapping games, sifting through wet sand or goop, and sorting small objects like coins or beads are all ways that your child can strenghten sensory awareness. Play and learning go hand in hand!

**Help Them Get Strong on Both Sides** Unlike Popeye, a quick shot of spinach won’t give your child stupendous strength. Instead, it’s important that they slowly and steadily build up strength on both sides of their bodies. These simple ideas will help your child grow big and strong: play Simon Says, encourage them to grab for objects with both hands, and play tag with the dominant hand behind their back.

**Boost Body Stability** Wheelbarrow walking, crab walking, wall push-ups, and running around on the playground will increase your child’s body stability…and stability is important for monkeying around!

**Extend the Wrist** Have your child take part in activities that exercise the wrist. Painting on an easel, working on a chalkboard, and tracing around stencils are all fantastic ways for students to refine their fine motor skills. Who knows? You might have a mini-Michelangelo on your hands!

**Improve Your child’s Hand-eye Coordination** Help your child feel coordinated and confident. By having your child throw beans bags into hula hoops, play catch, and knock down bowling pins, you’re encouraging eyes and hands to work together.

**Write-On!** Encourage your child to write frequently – Have them help write notes, grocery lists, cards to friends and family. Play games where written responses are present. Do coloring books, connect-the-dots, etc. as all will help build your child’s skill, and give them the “write stuff” for lifelong learning.