



## Why is Handwriting Important?



In this day and age of iPads®, laptops, and PC's, why is handwriting important? Research supports the active teaching of handwriting. Recent findings demonstrate that writing by hand improves creative writing and fine motor skills. In fact, elementary students have been found to write more and faster by hand than when keyboarding. Studies also show that retention of written words far exceeds that of typed words. With the adoption of Common Core State Standards, the emphasis and expectations placed on classroom note taking and expository writing in grades K-5 is greater than ever.

### Pre-Kindergarten Skills (age 4)

Your child is learning to:

- Copy and draw simple shapes
- Draw a person with three different body parts
- Color mostly within the lines of shapes and simple pictures
- Draw inside the path of a simple maze
- Trace and write some upper case letters
- Begin to write the letters in their name
- Transition from a palmar (whole fist) to tripod grasp (thumb, pointer, and middle finger)

### Kindergarten Skills (ages 5-6)

Your child is learning to:

- Demonstrate hand dominance
- Use a tripod grasp with writing utensil (thumb, pointer, middle finger)
- Identify upper case and lower case letters
- Copy upper case and lower case letters and numbers
- Print upper case and lower case letters and numbers from memory
- Write their first and last name
- Write the entire alphabet with varied neatness
- Start writing letters and numbers from the top
- Place letters and numbers on a baseline
- Write 2-5 letter words with appropriate spacing
- Begin words with capital letters; Write 2-3 word sentences
- Use ending punctuation for sentences

### Red Flags for Fine Motor/Handwriting Development

- Cannot decide which hand to use for fine motor activities
- Hand/arm movements are shaky or stiff
- Hands/arms seem very weak
- Is unable to draw basic shapes (circle, cross, square, triangle)
- Is unable to cut along straight and curved lines with scissors
- Is having difficulty learning to print letters or numbers

### **Get your child's handwriting on the "WRITE" track with occupational therapy!**

An occupational therapist can help by: addressing underlying fine motor, visual motor, and visual perceptual skills; demonstrating proper posture to support proper use of arms, hands, head, and eyes; teaching strategies based on a developmental sequence; using multisensory teaching for improved movement and memory; introducing a handwriting curriculum that can be taught in therapy and carried over at home; and suggesting home program ideas that promote development of skills needed for handwriting.

Keystone Pediatric Therapy occupational therapists offer a personalized one-on-one session for your child, incorporating various therapy techniques customized specifically for your child's development. Your child is given a nurturing environment to encourage maximum retention. Therapists meet with parents after every session, to discuss progress and give home program ideas. Keystone Pediatric Therapy occupational therapists can accommodate many school schedules.

Resources:  
<http://www.hwtears.com>

**Contact Keystone Pediatric Therapy  
to schedule an evaluation!**

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