

# Handwriting

The development of a child's handwriting can provide clues to developmental problems that may hinder a child's learning. Poor handwriting may lead to difficulties with schoolwork and confidence.

Handwriting is a complex activity that requires a child to manage the written language by:

- Coordinating movements of the eyes, arms and hands
- Using an efficient and comfortable pencil grip
- Mastering correct letter formation
- Maintaining proper body posture

## Occupational therapy can help by:

- Promoting proper posture to support the movement of arms, hands, head and eyes
- Improving the level of physical strength and endurance
- Increasing fine motor control, such as the ability to hold a pencil
- Improving visual motor and visual perceptual skills needed for writing letters, words and sentences
- Suggesting a home exercise program to promote the development of good handwriting skills

## What can parents and families do at home?

- Encourage children to participate in sports and games that will improve their visual, motor and coordination skills (playing ball sports, jacks, marbles and outdoor sports)
- Require children to use silverware when eating to develop hand grip
- Provide an activity that exercises the hands (such as cutting pie or pizza dough with cookie cutters)
- Encourage writing handwritten letters to grandparents or other family
- Drawing/writing on a vertical surface, such as an easel, window or chalkboard



**CookChildren's**  
Home Health