

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



Mark Making

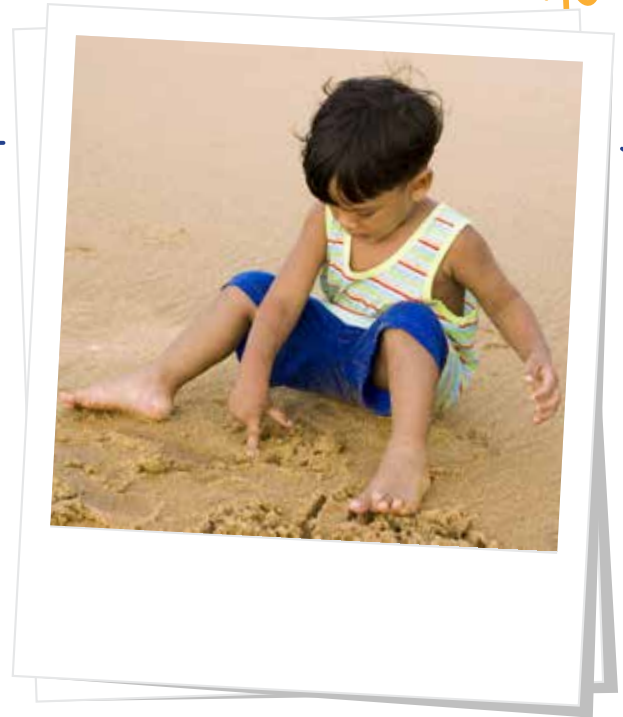
Toddlers love to explore their world and to experiment 'making their mark' in a playful way! Providing a wide range of drawing experiences will invite your toddler to explore the creative world available to them. This is a first step to a wide range of communication including reading, writing and art.

Did you know?

Drawing needn't be limited to paper activities. Sand, chalk, foam or shaving cream, dot paints, drawing boards and water all provide opportunities for creative fun making marks!

Early maths and science

As your toddler draws, name what they are doing or making. Give them choices to bring in colour concepts e.g. "Do you want the red or blue chalk?" Make comments on shapes you or your child are making e.g. "Line, line, dot", "Round, round, round – there's a circle!". Talk about size, and size comparisons e.g. "Wow – that's a big circle", "That's a little dot", "There's a long line", "That line is shorter". These concept words help develop language for early maths and science.



Other development

The process of creating is important to your toddler's emotional development and self-esteem. Families can help to support this by really enjoying the process and the making of art itself.

Try commenting on your child's behaviours such as persistence or enjoying the activity, rather than commenting on the quality of the artwork itself.

- Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas or visit www.facebook.com/playgroupwa

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Mark Making Continued...

Variations

Tracing around your toddler's body on a large piece of paper is a fun way to increase their body awareness and get them interested in drawing. Drawing or sticking things on to this drawing of their body develops their fine motor skills and sense of identity e.g. draw on eyes, nose, mouth and ears, and stick on fabric or paper clothes etc.

Thick or chunky pencils, crayons or markers are easier for little toddler hands to hold and control.

Stamping and stencils are other fun ways to make marks and develop hand skills such as using two hands together.

Rolling a toy car in paint and then on the paper can catch your child's interest.

This activity helps your child learn to move their hands across the midline of their body as they roll their car backwards and forwards in front of them.

Crossing the midline (using a hand on the opposite side of the body) develops over time and is important to later skills such as writing.

Safety

Non-toxic materials and supervision are important for your toddler's safety (and for your walls!) It can help to talk about where is ok to draw and where there is no drawing.



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