

*Especially for parents of infants!* 

# Scribble Scribble

 *Scribbling and Drawing*

About the same time infants use a spoon to eat, they often show an interest in trying to use crayons. Babies often become fascinated with writing instruments and how to mark and scribble with them.

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## What is the practice?

Crayons, magic markers, and other writing tools that are easy for young children to hold will work best. Making marks and scribbles comes naturally to most children. Showing a child how to use a crayon or magic marker to scribble is often all it takes! It won't be long before she tries to do it on her own.

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## What does the practice look like?

A child is seated on her mother's lap. Mom has been writing notes in her calendar. The baby girl's mother picks up a colored marker and starts scribbling. She says, "Swish, swish! Look at what Mommy is drawing." The baby reaches and grasps the marker. Her mother points to the paper and says "Sweetie, scribble here." She gently guides her daughter's hand to the paper. The baby tries to make a mark. Mom puts just enough pressure on the marker so that her daughter is successful. The little girl keeps trying until she finally does it on her own.



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## How do you do the practice?

There are many different ways to provide young children opportunities to scribble and draw. Here are some ideas you might find helpful with your child:

- Find a comfortable place for your child to sit where her hands are free. This will make it easier for her to grasp and move a writing tool. Sitting on your lap or in a highchair are some positions that you may want to try.
- Big crayons, fat pencils, and specially designed writing instruments are the things young children will use for scribbling. Search the Web for **adapted handles**. You will find ideas about how to make it easy for your child to hold writing tools.
- Child-safe magic markers are generally easy for infants to hold and use. You might even try big pieces of chalk. Make it easy for your child to hold onto a crayon or marker. The easier it is to hold, the more likely she will be able to use it to make marks.
- Pick the right surface for the kind of writing tool your child is using. Use paper for crayons and pencils, white board for magic markers, and blackboard or sidewalk for chalk.
- Turn the scribbling activity into a conversation. Talk about what your child is doing. Show her how excited you are by her efforts at "writing."

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## How do you know the practice worked?

- Does your child show increased interest in scribbling and making marks?
- Is she getting better at picking up and holding a writing tool?
- Does she seem pleased at what she has done by smiling, vocalizing, and getting excited?

# Take a look at more infant scribbling fun

## *Writing Just Like Mom*

One-year-old Corrie's mother is making a shopping list. Corrie reaches and grabs the pencil out of her mother's hand. She then tries to "write" like Mom. Corrie makes scribbling marks on the paper. Mom now gives Corrie her own pencil and paper so she can do her own writing. Mom tries different writing instruments to find ones that Corrie can easily hold. Corrie's mother uses this activity to talk about who they are writing to and what they need to add to their shopping list.



## *Sand Writing*

Rachel, 16 months old, and her father love being outside and playing. One of Rachel's favorite things is sand play. She loves to dig, dump, move, and squeeze the sand. Dad notices how much his daughter loves having her hands in wet sand. He decides to see what Rachel will do if he pretends to write in the sand. He smooths out the sand and says he is going to write her name. He uses a stick and prints her name while repeating each letter. Rachel is fascinated by what she sees. Using her finger, she tries to write in the sand just like Dad. She does her best and makes a bunch of scribbles and lines. Dad shows his excitement by saying, "Rachel, you wrote your name! You are such a good writer!" Rachel beams with delight.

## *Computer Scribbling*

Nine-month-old Jonah isn't able to hold onto writing tools like pens and pencils because of his motor impairment. His mother learned about a computer program that lets young children draw on a computer screen using a computer mouse. Mom sits Jonah on her lap in front of the computer. She places his hand on the mouse. Mom helps him use the mouse as they watch scribbles and marks appear on the screen. Jonah nearly goes crazy with joy! In no time he is scribbling and making all kinds of marks. As soon as Mom clears the screen, Jonah is at it again.

