

**“What I say,
I can write.
And what I write,
I can read.”**

Marie M. Clay

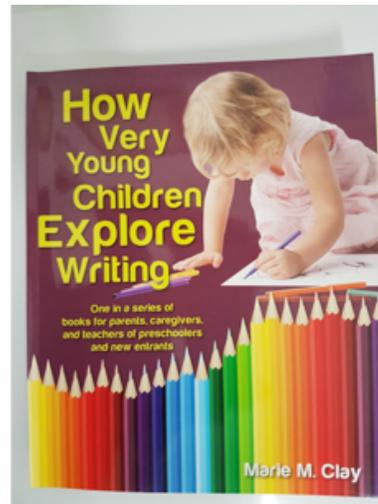
Talking Matters Network Meeting

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Some recommendations for families with very young children exploring writing

1. Have a bag or box handy with different crayons, markers and paints, and paper of varying sizes and colours. The paper can be recycled or leftover pieces from other projects.
2. Let your children see *you* writing. You could be writing your grocery list, things to do or writing a birthday or thank you card.
3. Scribbling, drawing, exploring shapes that are in letters (e.g., circles, lines, crosses) are early and useful experimentation in their own right. As a child develops pictures will carry the story. At some point, they may add writing to their picture, communicating their message in picture and print.
4. When your child draws a picture that conveys a story, you could invite them to tell you the message that you print in their words.
5. Enjoy and encourage your child’s explorations with drawing and writing. No need to correct or *teach* in these very early years. Better to see yourself as sitting alongside your child and noticing what he or she is doing or saying. Show delight in whatever they do.
6. You could add the date to these “masterpieces”, so that you can see subtle changes or giant steps as you look back over time. If you notice a change, you could make a note on the back of the paper or in a notebook. Just as you look back at photographs of how your child grows over time, these explorations will document how your child’s writing is growing over time.

Clay, M. M. (2010). *How very young children explore writing: One in a series of books for parents, caregivers, and teachers of preschoolers and new entrants*. Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson.