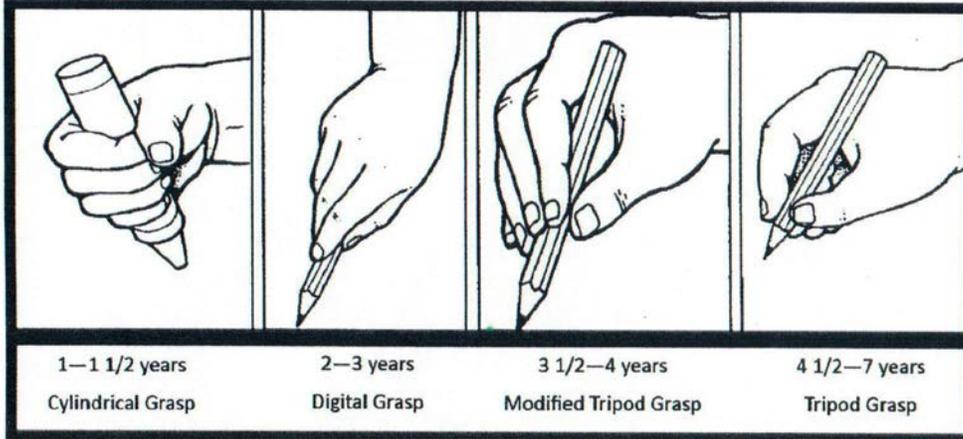


## Developing Small Motor Skills and an Efficient Pencil Grip Are Important Parts of Learning How to Write—and Enjoying the Process!

Dear Parents,



**Good handwriting matters, beginning with a good pencil grasp!**

*If handwriting motions are not efficient, it interferes with the whole process.*

**As your child develops a better pencil grasp, the writing process becomes easier.**

(This drawing shows typical progression of preschool development of pencil grasp. We were not able to locate its source.)

**It is normal** for children to enter kindergarten with a wide range of fine-motor development. **Some children start the year with an efficient pencil grasp**, and others are developing one. This is because children's finger muscles develop with time and experience.

**We are asking you to support your child in learning an efficient pencil grasp.**

- Teach your child how to hold crayons, draw, and color within lines.
- Then, provide many opportunities to fingerspell, use scissors, tweezers, and small building toys.
- We want learning this important skill to be a positive experience!

**Why is a pencil grip so important?**

We often remind the children:

- *Boys and girls, the reason we want to hold a pencil with a good finger grip is so we can write better and faster and so our finger muscles won't get tired.*
- *When you hold your pencil correctly, you will be able to see what you are writing.*
- *It is important for people to be able to read our writing and that is why we practice holding our pencil firmly, just like in the picture.*

**Learning good handwriting skills in kindergarten develops a host of other important skills:** It teaches a child to focus, set goals, and develop a willingness to work hard and try new skills. These are vital "Habits of Mind" for school success—and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century!

Our high expectations as teachers and parents working together allow us to give your child a very useful gift: a life-long habit of efficient handwriting!

**SMILES!**

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