



## News and Events

\* The UPK office is asking every family to complete **two surveys** this month. Please respond to both by **May 31**. The surveys are short and will require just a minute of your time. You can click on the links to take you to each survey.

The first one is a **Kindergarten Intention Survey**. The district needs to know where this year's UPK students will be next fall. Please let us know whether or not your child will be attending kindergarten in Rush-Henrietta.

The second one is the **UPK Parent Feedback** form. Please share your thoughts about the program and your child's experience in UPK. This survey helps us plan for next year's program.

\* The school district **budget vote** and Board of Education election will be held from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, at the Transportation and Operations Center, 1133 Lehigh Station Road. All eligible district residents are encouraged to participate.



The Family Center is hosting an **International Night** at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 13. Please join us as we celebrate the cultures of multiple countries represented by the students who attend our adult English literacy classes. See the attached flyer for details!

## Parent Discussion Group

This month, Betsy Marshall will host a discussion on "**Conferencing and Family School Partnerships.**" Parents can learn how to be actively engaged in their child's education. She will highlight the importance of establishing relationships with teachers and will provide tips for successful school conferences. See the attached flyer for details and the calendar below for session dates and times!

### Conferencing and Family School Partnerships

UPK Site	Date	Times
Augustin	Thursday, May 15	9-10 a.m.
Care-a-lot	Monday, May 12	8-9 a.m.
Expressive Beginnings	Tuesday, May 13	8:30-9:30 a.m.
Good Shepherd	Monday, May 12	12-1 p.m.
Henrietta Recreation Center	Tuesday, May 13	11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Richard M. Guon Child Care Center at MCC	Monday, May 5	9-10 a.m.
Pride and Joy	Tuesday, May 6	8:30-9:30 a.m.

## Tips for Parents

Learning to write requires knowledge about print, the alphabet, and how sounds are represented by letters. It also requires fine motor skills to hold and control a pencil. Writing is a complex skill but you can support your child's writing development at home. Please read this month's "Family Focus" article to learn more!

### Calendar

There will be no UPK classes on Monday, May 26, in honor of Memorial Day.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
				<p>Talk about recycling and have your child help sort the recyclables. Review what materials can and cannot be recycled.</p> 	<p>While your child eats breakfast, place a cereal box in front of them. Ask them to identify letters, numbers, colors and/or shapes on the box.</p>	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p><b>May 5-11 is Children's Book Week!</b> Enjoy a week's worth of literacy activities.</p>	<p>Read a book with your child and talk about the <b>characters</b>. Were they people, animals, aliens...? Discuss some of their characteristics</p>	<p>Check out this website to hear wonderful stories read by celebrity guest readers. <a href="http://storylineonline.net">storylineonline.net</a></p>	<p>Visit the Henrietta Public Library. Get a card and check out a few books to take home!</p>	<p>Story hour – check out Mrs. Marshall's fantastic read alouds! <a href="https://sites.google.com/rhnet.org/the-nurtured-nest/activities/story-time">https://sites.google.com/rhnet.org/the-nurtured-nest/activities/story-time</a></p>	<p>If the weather permits, take a book(s) outside and have a "reading picnic."</p>	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	<p>Go for a walk and have your child listen carefully. Have them identify 3-5 different sounds they hear.</p>	<p>Help your child think of words that rhyme with hair  (Ex: chair, pear, bear)</p>	<p>Turn out the lights and use a flashlight to create shadows. Move closer to and further from the light and note what happens.</p>	<p>Ask your child to draw a picture of what they did today. Add words to their picture or have them help you write some words.</p>	<p>Allow your child to bring a few toys or household items into the bathtub. Experiment to see which ones sink and which ones float.</p>	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	<p>Have your child clap the syllables they hear in: <b>May, sunshine, cloudy, recycling, flashlight, shadow.</b></p>	<p>Go outside or look out the window and discuss the clouds. Take turns telling stories about the shapes of clouds.</p> 	<p>Take a vote in your home to choose which dessert is the favorite: Cookies vs. Cupcakes</p> 	<p>Have your child find 3 items in the house that are bigger and smaller than they are.</p>	<p>Enjoy the long weekend and get outside!</p> 	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	<p><b>Memorial Day</b></p>	<p>Introduce solid shapes like cube (dice,) cylinder (drinking glass,) and sphere (ball.) Have your child find one of each around the house.</p>	<p>Work your child's fingers and have them play with playdough, chalk, slime, or Legos.</p> 	<p>Have your child go on a scavenger hunt inside or outside. Give them a list of things to find (Ex: find a rock, flower, insect, etc.)</p>	<p><b>Joke of the month:</b>  Which flower talks the most?  Tulips! ("2 lips")</p>	

Rush Henrietta Universal Pre-K  
**Parenting Education Programs**



## **Conferencing & Family School Partnerships**

- Establishing relationships between teachers and parents is vital to success in education.
- Learn how to get involved in your child's education and tips for a successful conference.

Betsy Marshall, Parent Educator, will be providing a free hour long program for parents/caregivers. Attend any meeting that fits your schedule.

<b>UPK Site</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Times</b>
Richard M. Guon Child Care Center at MCC	Monday, May 5	9-10 a.m.
Pride & Joy	Tuesday, May 6	8:30-9:30 a.m.
Care-A-Lot	Monday, May 12	8 - 9 a.m
Good Shepherd	Monday, May 12	12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Expressive Beginnings	Tuesday, May 13	8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Town Rec. Center	Tuesday, May 13	11:30 - 12:30 p.m.
Augustin	Thursday, May 15	9-10 a.m.
Rush Nursery School	Thursday, May 15	2-3 p.m

**All are welcome! Please join us (any of the sites/times that work for your schedule). This is a free program for adults.**



# Family Focus

Building a Foundation for School Success

## Getting Ready for School Writing With Your Child Everyday

*Writing is one of the most complex skills children will develop! Learning to write requires children developing knowledge about print, the alphabet, and how sounds are represented by letters. It also requires fine motor skills to hold a pencil and to control how it moves. Writing is a very complex skill, but you can support your child to become a writer!*

### Why is this important for school readiness?

“Early writing is one of the best predictors of children’s later reading success.” But writing is complicated and involves understanding how print works and the names and sounds of the alphabet. Writing also requires “phonological awareness” which is recognizing that language is made up of sounds. Children also need to grasp the “alphabetic principle” and understand that oral language is made up of sounds and letters that represent these sounds.

Writing is developmental; it starts with toddlers’ early scribbling, and then moves to “controlled scribbling”. As children notice print in books and signs, they begin to use “letter-like forms” often mixed with drawing. Although this is not real writing, the letter-like forms stage shows they understand that print represents language. Before and about the time they are in kindergarten, most children start to write letters that represent words they hear. They write their name and know those marks say their name.

Children learn writing by playing, being read to, and being a writer. Here are some ideas of how you can support your child’s development in this critical area of kindergarten readiness.

### What can families do to help?

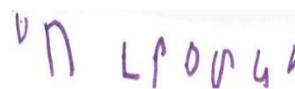
- ❖ To help children understand that writing is used to communicate, write in front of your child and explain what you’re writing. Use everyday activities such as writing shopping lists, e-mails, to-do lists, thank you notes, etc. Involve your child by asking what to write and letting him or her write on the list or send a thank you note.
- ❖ Display your child’s writing in a special place and/or share it with people who are important to your child (ex. grandparents). This tells your child his or her writing is important and displaying it will encourage more writing.
- ❖ Create an “office” for your child. Gather up different types and colors of paper, small notebooks, envelopes, stickers, crayons, pencils and pens in a basket, container or box. Place this on a shelf near a desk or a table that can serve as your child’s office. Your child can take this “traveling” office to other places in your home.
- ❖ Recognize what early writing looks like:

Letter-Like Forms (3-5 years)



Letter & Symbol

Relationship (3-5 years)



- ❖ Writing can happen outside as well. Let your child use chalk or an old paintbrush with water to write on the sidewalk. When going on errands or a car trip, pack a backpack of writing tools and paper for your child.

## Activities to do with your preschooler:

### ❖ Use a Salt Tray to Teach Your Child to Write His or Her Name: *Sensory Salt Tray*

Use a cookie sheet or the lid from a shoe box to make a salt tray for your child to practice “writing” his or her name or other words, or for just swishing the salt around.

Here’s what you do:

- Use a cookie sheet or the lid from a shoe box as a tray.
- Write your child’s name in marker or crayon on a sheet of unlined paper that will cover the bottom of the tray. Use all capital letters first and then go on to using upper- and lower-case letters. Place the paper on the bottom of the tray.
- Pour a layer of salt and shake gently so the salt covers the bottom of the tray. You child can still see the letters on the paper underneath the salt to use as a guide. Your child then uses his or her finger to trace the letters and write his or her name. If your child makes a mistake, a gentle shake lets him or her start again!
- Sand and corn meal can be substituted for salt. They work well too!



### ❖ As Your Child to Dictate a Story You Write and Your Child Illustrates: *I Am An Author*

Your child can be an author and illustrator with your help. While being an author, your child is learning about print, words, letters. Children have lots of stories to share, especially if you read books to your child regularly.

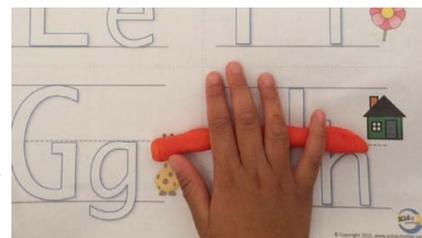
- Fold 3-5 unlined 8 ½ X 11 sheets of paper together to make a booklet. Staple on the fold.
- Ask your child to tell a story for you to write down. Some children prefer drawing the story and tell telling you what words to write, and others like to illustrate the story after all the writing is done.
- As you write what your child says, say each word as you write it and talk about what you’re writing.
- Don’t forget to write the author’s name (or your child can write his or her name) on the cover near the title!



### ❖ Make and Shape Play Dough Letters: *Make Letters*

Using play dough to learn letters and how to practice making letters is a fun hands-on activity for children. You can make no-cook play dough with your child and then use it to make long “snakes” to create letters. If you like, you can download and print these free [alphabet mats](#) to create the play dough letters on.

- Begin by making the no-cook play dough. Write down this recipe so that your child can see it. Make the play dough with your child pointing to each word as you follow it. It’s a great literacy activity too! Here’s the recipe:
  - 1 ½ cups plain flour, ½ cup salt, 2 tsp cream of tartar, 2 Tbsp vegetable or canola oil, food coloring (gel food coloring creates brighter colored play dough)
  - Mix all dry ingredients in a bowl (let your child measure, dump and stir)
  - You add the boiling water to the bowl and mix well.
  - If you want all the dough one color, add the color to the water. If you want small amounts of different colors from one batch, add the color to the dough after making it and knead it well.
- Roll the play dough into long strips and make letters and shapes. Your child can use a plastic knife to cut the play dough. Store the play dough in a plastic bag. It will keep for a long time.



**Resources used for this tip sheet:** [Support Writing at Home](#) National Association for the Education of Young Children  
[How Do I Write...? Scaffolding Preschoolers’ Early Writing Skills](#)

**Resources for families:** [Center for Early Language and Literacy Parent Handouts](#) [15 Pre-Writing Activities for Preschoolers](#)  
[Practice Name Writing in 12 Fun Ways for Preschoolers](#) [How Writing Develops](#)