

Introduction

Using scissors successfully suggests the child has developed a wide range of skills. They may have the skill to use small scissors by 3-4 years. But the skills will not be fully developed until about 6 years

Handling of scissors

- Finger Position (Some children may require physical assistance to position their hands appropriately on the scissors).
- Hand position (Always encourage a 'thumbs up' position when cutting i.e. thumbs uppermost).
- Supporting hand position (Always encourage a 'thumbs up' position with the supporting hand).
- Type of Scissors (There are various types of scissors available and it will depend on the nature of the difficulty, as to which type is most appropriate, if any).
- Easi grip scissors are often helpful, initially. (See equipment list in the resource pack).

Snipping

- Try making "Hedgehogs". Practice snipping straws, which then can be pushed into play dough balls to make hedgehogs.
- Feeding the crocodiles. Use paper strips 1cm wide and snip pieces off the strip, then using clothes pegs as the 'crocodiles' feed the crocodiles.

- Make a lion. Print a face on to the middle of a circle or square of paper or thin card. Encourage the child to snip all around the edge making a mane. The end result could then be put on a straw.

Making a series of cuts

- Paper Strips. Use varying widths of paper strips to cut across increasing the width as the child's skill improves.

Developing accuracy

- 'Road cutting'. Introduce thick coloured lines to cut along, initially, use lines at least 2cm thick across a strip of paper 6cm wide. The child should be able to cut across the width of an A4 piece of paper prior to attempting this.
- Encourage the child to cut on the 'road', the width of the 'road', can then be reduced 1/2cm at a time, as the child's accuracy improves.
- When the child is able to cut along straight road introduce gentle curves, then zigzags and then simple shapes such as circles and squares.
- Finally increase the complexity of the shape.

Stopping

- Using lines drawn on paper, where the line does not reach the other side but stops. Encourage child to cut along the line only stopping when the line stops.

- Making a lantern. Use a basic paper lantern template and encourage the child to cut up the lines in the middle, stopping at the end of the lines. Use this principle in other craft activities.

Appropriate Seating

Always ensure your child is sitting on an appropriate height chair where their feet can be comfortably flat on the floor with their knees and hips at 90 degrees.

Activities to develop fine motor skills required for scissor skills.

Using the dominant hand

- Using tongs to pick up objects and transfer theme e.g. kitchen tongs to pick up cotton balls.
- Games, which include tongs such as operation or wok 'n' roll.
- Use clothes pegs, which need to be squeezed to open.
- Use clothes pegs in games, timing in what time a child can put 10 pegs on the edge of a jar, or how long it takes the child to pick up 10 cotton wool balls, the child could then try to beat their score.
- Use food baser to blow along a Ping-Pong ball into a goal.

Additional information on Hand strength

Strong hands are required to complete everyday activity such as holding scissors and pencils correctly, buttoning, turning taps and opening lunch packages. Hand strength increases as children grow and are able to use their hands for more activities. A large increase in grip strength occurs between the ages of three and six years.

Activities

- Crawling, pulling with arms, swinging, climbing, helps strengthens arms.
- Try activities that offer reasonable resistance as mentioned before scrunching up newspaper into large balls and throw them in a box.
- Squeezing sponges to move water from one container to another.
- Scooping water , rice or sand into different containers
- Use cutters or garlic presses with play dough.

Strategies

- Don't be too quick to help with more difficult tasks such as opening crisp packages
- If the child's hands look very weak or awkward consult with an Occupational therapist as there be other factors may be involved.

Frequency of Activities

Engage the child with activities from this programme for up to 15 minutes for 3 focused sessions a week. Simply adjusting your current activities and encouraging the child's participation in activities they would not usually not normally choose will support development.

Complete activities from this sheet for 3 months

Improving our service

We continue to review our service to make sure that it meets the needs of those who are using it. We would appreciate any suggestions on how we may improve and also comments on what was good about the service.

If you have any compliments, suggestions or complaints, please write to or contact any member of staff in the first instance, or to the Occupational Therapy Service Lead if necessary.

Contact details: see part 1 of pack



BUSY HANDS PENCIL GRASP

Early Years Activity Sheet

PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
SERVICES