

Introduction

The development of precise finger movements is required for the development of many of the fine motor activities completed by children every day in the home and nursery environment.

They are required for the development of pencil skills, scissor skills, playing with toys and independence skills such as doing up the zip on a coat and using a manipulating cutlery.

Fine motor skills can be developed by developing a child's sensory awareness and by practicing games involving finger isolation and manipulation.

Children with poor fine motor skills may have the following difficulties

- Needing to rely overly on visual information to manipulate small objects.
- Difficulty with or avoidance of fine motor activities such as drawing, threading, and games that involve fine motor manipulation.
- They will often seek adult support and rely on adults to complete tasks.

Activities

Isolating Finger Movements

- Finger painting
- Pinching and prodding play dough or plasticine
- Finger puppets
- Finger football
- Counting small objects on the table
- Tracing down a path with index finger on paper or chalk board
- Popping bubbles
- Pointing at pictures in a book
- Finger action songs e.g. Tommy thumb, round & round the garden

Encouraging use of a pincer grip

The pincer grasp is when small items are held between the tip of the thumb and tip of the index finger.

- Pop bubble wrap paper
- Place small pegs into a peg board
- Placing plastic coins in a money box
- Picking up chocolate buttons/raisins off the table
- Small handled inset puzzles
- Opening & closing clothes pegs
- Use tongs/tweezers to pick up small objects and place them in a container

- Commercial games such as flicking frogs, monkey tree, "kerplunk", pick-up sticks, tiddlywinks

Finger Dexterity

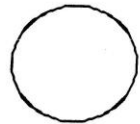
Finger dexterity involves being able to grasp objects in the hands and fingers for precision and accuracy. This is a skill children learn through play and it is through repetition and practice that their movements become:

- More refined (can pick up smaller objects)
- More accurate with manipulation and placement of objects
- Faster whilst maintaining accuracy

Activity suggestions

- 5 beads & lace – thread beads as quickly as possible (start with large beads and progress to smaller ones)
- 15 Lego pieces – fit them together as quickly as possible
- Ice cream container & 10 clothes pegs – place the pegs around the top of the box using finger & thumb to open and close them
- 5 coins & 5 empty match boxes – open each box place one coin inside then close the box

Example of mark making and drawing



Adult



child
samples



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

MAKING MEANINGFUL MARKS

Early Years Activity Sheet

**PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY SERVICES**