Fine Motor Activities

Fine motor activities give young children fun things to do that will strengthen the muscles needed for fine motor control. This helps them with handwriting, cutting and more. Fine motor skills develop after gross motor skills—the body trunk (core), shoulder, elbow and forearm, wrist, fingers.

Self-Help Activities:

Use a zipper

Close snaps

Button clothing

General Activities:

Insert pipe cleaners into holes in a box

Cut straws and make a necklace

Press items onto sticky paper

Place buttons on drawn lines

Use a hole punch

Press pasta into playdough

Clip clothes pins on the side of cardboard

Use a squirt bottle to spell or draw on cement

Use a baster in water

Stretch rubber bands around a can

Push Pin Picture—use a push pin that had a top. Get a picture from a coloring book and have the child "trace" the picture by poking holes on the outline.

Stringing—use pipe cleaners/string/yarn and beads/noodles/buttons

Pincer Fun—use clothes pins/tongs/ tweezers to pick up cotton balls, beans, noodles

Nuts and Bolts—put together nut and bolts

While you Play:

Play with playdough or clay

Put puzzles together

Build with blocks—wooden, Legos, Tinker Toys, Lincoln Logs

Lacing cards-homemade or store bought

Cutting with scissors- make sure your child is holding the scissors correctly. When cutting remind your child that both thumbs should be up-one in the scissor hole and the thumb holding the item being cut. Be sure your child has their cutting hand elbow close to their body and not way up in the air.

What to cut: Make snowflakes, cut along straight or curvy lines, cut out shapes, cut edge of paper to make grass, tape newspaper to side of table or wall and have your child start at the bottom and cut up the paper (the cutting up helps with the shoulder muscle, too)

Handwriting-

- All letters start at the top and go down or curve
- Write name with only the first letter as a capital and the rest lowercase ex. Joyce not JOYCE
- Try to help your child use a 3 finger grasp/grip
- If your child is struggling to hold the pencil correctly, tuck a cotton ball in their hand to be held with the ring and pinky finger. This helps them to practice just using only the 3 fingers.
- Use a golf pencil or a really short regular pencil. This forces them to hold it correctly because there is only a little bit to hold.
- Your child does not need to make a letter 100 times in practice. Just help and watch them make 5 really good ones.
- Encourage the effort! Save a sample of their work. You will see it get better and better all year long—due to practice and further motor development in the body.