



School Readiness Tip Sheet

Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor movements involve the coordination of small muscles in the hands and fingers. Strong fine motor skills are essential to complete tasks such as writing, cutting, using a fork, threading beads, building a puzzle, zipping, buttoning and tying shoelaces.

Try the following activities to support your child's fine motor development:

- Roll play dough into tiny balls using just the fingers tips.
- Tear newspaper into strips and then crumble them into balls.
- Pick up pennies and put them in a bank or a slot in a jar lid.
- Use a squirt gun or spray snow with a plant sprayer (mix food coloring with water).
- String cheerios or macaroni onto yarn. Wrap the end of the yarn with a small piece of tape to make a firm tip.
- Use eyedroppers to “pick up” and squeeze out colored water for color mixing.
- Cut pieces of paper. Use child sized scissors. Encourage “thumb on top” position.
- Draw in sand, salt, playdough or rice with fingers or tools like sticks and toothpicks.
- Spread butter or soft food with small table knife. (with supervision)
- Squeeze clothespins and clip them to a box. Use tweezers or tongs to pick up cotton balls.



- Operate snaps, buckles, hooks and zippers on clothing.
- Pull apart and put together blocks like Duplos or Legos.
- Screw or snap lids onto jars or containers.
- Provide a variety of writing and drawing tools. Demonstrate and encourage proper pencil “tripod” grip.