

# Hand Skills

## Strategies to try:

- Encouraging gross motor activities will help to develop strength, stability and balance skills allowing your child to achieve upright postures before refining their fine motor skills.
- Working on strength and dexterity of their fingers will help to control objects effectively.
- Have a tool box of games which promote fine motor skills, such as cards games, construction toys, magnetic mazes, dressing dolls, lacing games.
- Encourage your child to take part in their everyday activities, even though they might be tricky, by giving support and encouragement.
- Chose an appropriate time to practice tricky skills when everyone has time.

Children rely on their hands to complete most of their functional activities, such as dressing, writing, drawing, cutting with scissors and playing with toys. Effective hand skills help children to participate and engage in the tasks they need to do everyday.



- Games that encourage squeezing with the whole palm and also with thumb against finger(s), e.g. sponges in water, water pistols.
- Play dough activities, rolling and shaping with hands or later on with tools, e.g. a rolling pin, safety knife and/or fork.
- Early hammering games, e.g. with toy bench or egg cartons, moving on to games that require more precision, e.g. hammer nail sets.
- Practice posting items such as larger coins, letters and buttons.
- Threading large beads, progressing to smaller beads and lacing cards.
- Use tongs to pick up larger objects such as socks, soft balls, etc, progressing to tweezers with smaller objects, e.g. small pom-poms, small plastic characters.
- Working with small hand staplers / hole punches or clipping clothes pegs onto cardboard sheets or clothing.
- Play with jigsaw puzzles or board games, such as KerPlunk or Connect Four.
- Play with construction toys starting with building sets, e.g. Lego, magnetic sets, and moving on to more complex sets that require tools to fasten and loosen nuts and bolts.
- Make a peg mosaic, use Hama beads or make a pin/peg picture.