DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Playing, self-feeding, dressing, jumping, digging, hopping and crafting activities all can help develop hand and finger strength AND dexterity.

Children with weak hands and fingers tend to avoid activities which require strength and as a result don't develop strength.

Some children often use a whole handed grasp which doesn't allow for adequate strength to develop in the fine pinch pattern or they may use pad-to-pad grip instead of tip-to-tip.

****ALWAYS Encourage GOOD skill development****

What is GOOD skill development?

- use tips of fingers
- ALL the joints in the finger are flexed (bent)
- don't use entire hand

Finger Names





Thumb

Pointer - also called index finger

Middle - also called tall man

Ring

Pinkie

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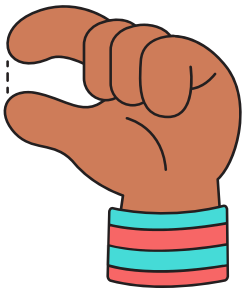
DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Pincer Grasp

What is GOOD skill development?



Pincer Grasp - enables a child to pick up small items using the thumb and index finger (tip-to-tip).
NOT with the MIDDLE FINGER!!



- Tip of the thumb meets the tip of index finger
- ALL the joints in the finger are flexed (bent)
- Finger look ready to move and use a writing tool!

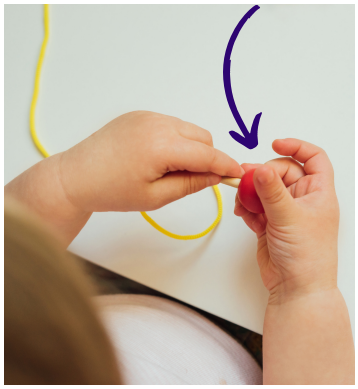


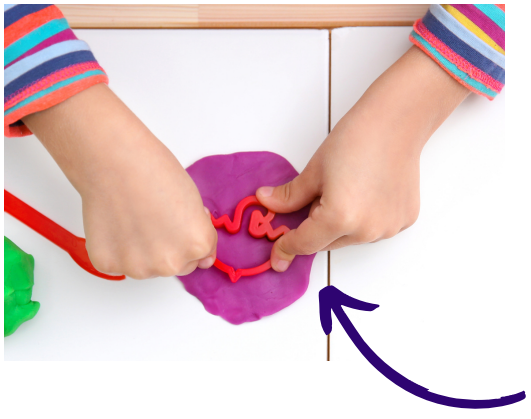


What you DON'T want to see...

1. Using side of index finger
2. Using middle finger (instead of pointer finger)
3. Finger joints hyper-extended (bending backwards)







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DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Motoric Separation

What is GOOD skill development?



- Develops skill side and power side of hand
- Needed for manipulation and fine motor skills like fastening buttons or zipper, printing and cutting

Skill side of the hand

- Thumb, index and middle fingers
- Skilled, fast and small movements
- Essential for fast, non-fatiguing, legible print



Power/Stability side of the hand

- Ring and little fingers tucked into palm of the hand
- Give stability and power so moving fingers can do their jobs

What you DON'T want to see...







** If a child is using ENTIRE HAND and **having difficulty keeping last 2 fingers tucked into hand** – try giving them a **small pompom** or another small object to hold inside**









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DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Activities to Build...

Pincer Grip & Motoric Separation

1. Play games that use small pieces and require the use of your thumb and pointer fingers together using a "pincer grip" (e.g. beading, sewing, pick-up-sticks, perler beads).



2. Use snack time to encourage use of grip. Pick up small foods using the thumb and pointer finger. Lineup the snack, make shapes or letters.



3. Play games using small medicine droppers. Squeeze the bulb end and "blow" feathers or ping pong balls off the table, or enjoy fun water play!

4. Push golf tees into styrofoam or playdough to make designs. Keep thumb bent!

5. Use tongs or large tweezers to pick up small items and move them from one place to another. Or play games with tongs & tweezers!

** Make sure thumb is bent, 2 fingers on tongs and last 2 fingers tucked in hand. See picture to right - keep tongs in open part of hand! **



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