

Fine Motor Development

Fine motor skills generally refer to one's ability to control the small movements of the hands and fingers. Once children start school, good control of the hand muscles will allow them to draw and print with a minimum of effort.

Developing fine motor skills can be fun! The following activities will give your child a sense of achievement while helping to develop essential handwriting skills. So let your child improve fine motor skills without forcing the use of a pencil.

Suggested Pencil-Free Fine Motor Activities

- Stringing beads
- Lacing cards
- Playdough activities
- Putting coins in a bank
- Lego
- Cutting with scissors
- Picking up items with a tweezer
- Playing games with small pieces
- Puzzles
- Finger puppets
- Snapping snaps
- Buttoning buttons
- Zipping sippers
- Colouring with markers or crayons
- Painting with a paintbrush

Playdough

Playdough helps children develop the finger control and coordination they need for writing. Children love to push, stretch, pummel and knead the dough, using fingers, hands, wrists and knuckles. These activities all strengthen and develop small muscles.

Playdough Recipe

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons creme of tartar
- 2 packages of *unsweetened* Kool-Aid for colouring (or use bright food colour)
- 2 cups of boiling water
- 2 Tablespoons of oil

Combine ingredients together and stir well. The dough will start to form a ball and come away from the edges. Sprinkle flour on the counter and knead the dough. Store in an airtight container.