

Playing with Scissors and Glue

Cutting and pasting helps children develop fine motor skills while having fun. It also encourages creativity. Scissor practice is an important pre-writing skill as the act of using scissors effectively helps develop the muscles of the hand required to hold a pencil efficiently.

Teaching Children To Use Scissors

Learning to cut involves two separate skills - the grip-release motion and cutting on a line.

When children start learning how to cut make sure they know how to hold and use scissors correctly. Left handed children should use specially designed left handed scissors.

The kindergarten teachers in the Cowichan Valley like to use the following rhyme to help practice the correct grip and the grip-release motion...

*“Two fingers on the bottom, thumb on the top,
open them close them chop chop chop!”*

- 1) The typical instruction for early scissor use involves making small “snips”. Play dough “snakes” are soft and easy to cut. Next, give your child narrow strips of paper and have them snip it into pieces (you can use the pieces to make a collage, or perhaps as confetti!)
- 2) When your child is ready they can start cutting straight lines - use the templates provided - or make your own! Using a slightly heavier paper such as construction paper or light card stock can really help. Cut lots of straight lines - practice straight lines until they are smooth all the way from beginning to end as this is how your child will master the grip and release technique.
- 3) Cut lots of circles and spirals. Teach your child to keep the scissors pointed to the ceiling and use their free hand to “drive” the paper being cut. You can sit behind them and use hand-over-hand to help them get the feel of the smooth movement of “driving” the paper with their free hand.
- 4) Progress to simple shapes. Once your child has the hang of turning the paper while cutting, then progress to simple shapes. Your child needs to learn to gauge when to “turn” the corners with the scissors, and how to keep the scissors in the corner while turning. Again, cut lots and lots of shapes, be creative with them and combine them with lines and circles to make fun crafts and pictures.

** Remember, to be safe (and to avoid unfortunate hair incidents) a child should not be left unattended while using scissors.

Other Cutting And Pasting Activities

- cut out coloured card stock and create modern art
- give your child old greeting cards to cut and create with
- cut out family photos to make a family tree
- use magazines to make collages