

PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine motor skills is the coordination of small muscle movements involving synchronization of hands and fingers. It starts with a gross grasp and develops into a precision grasp and includes in-hand manipulation. Gross grasp is the use of the larger muscles in the arm facilitating the whole hand to manipulate objects. A precision grasp involves the coordinated movement of the thumb, index/middle finger for small object manipulation. In-hand manipulation is the ability to use all fingers to move small objects within the hand without using the other hand.

Precision Grasp:

- Use thumb, index and middle finger to pick up small objects (pennies, cheerios, candy, beads, etc.) one by one while the last two fingers are closed tight against the palm
- Pinch Play Doh, Theraputty or cookie dough
- Clipping paper clips onto a piece of card
- Putting pennies into a piggy bank or any container with a slot in the lid
- Feed a vending machine
- Feed self or doll with cheerios or small pieces of food
- Draw small circles
- Rolling Play Doh or dough into a small ball using tips of fingers
- Turning small dials
- Rotating a pencil to erase
- Picking up a puzzle piece and repositioning it with the fingers for correct placement
- Play-Doh / Theraputty activities pinch, pull, creation of shapes/ animals/ letters/ numbers, cut it, and treasure hunt (hiding items in it)
- Coloring with broken crayons
- Any writing activities
- Any art project such as painting, sculpture, sidewalk chalk
- Any put in / sorting activities with various sized objects

Gross Grasp:

- Chunky wooden piece puzzles or puzzles with large knobs
- Basket or bowl full of random kitchen items (i.e. measuring spoons, measuring cups, strainers, cookie cutters)
- Use boxes to draw on with crayons or let child bang it with kitchen tools
- Colander and pipe cleaner activity- can put beads onto pipe cleaner and move them.
- Put-in activities (i.e. pom-poms into water bottle or muffin tins, pieces of pipe cleaner into water bottle)
- Use different types of utensils and cups to scoop/transfer containers of beans, rice, etc.
- Stacking plastic cups
- Drum with pots and pans
- Play Doh with cookie cutters and other kitchen items
- Help in kitchen (i.e. mixing batter, pour, etc.)
- Weaving ribbons through the slats on the back of a chair
- Painting with sponges
- Tearing paper or crumpling tissue paper
- Shooting crumpled up newspaper and tossing into wastepaper basket
- Homemade play dough
- Throw water balloons in the backyard or the bathtub
- Allow child to fill up your empty water bottles with water from the tub faucet
- Child can use a sponge to clean their toy cars in the tub, the sink, or a bucket of water
- Pool noodle stringing activity- cut up a pool noodle into manageable sized pieces and string them with a jump rope or a thick rope

In-hand Manipulation:

- Use thumb, index and middle finger to pick up small objects (pennies, cheerios, candy, beads, etc.) one by one and secure them in the palm while the last two fingers are closed tight against the palm
- Use thumb, index and middle fingers to move small objects (pennies, cheerios, candy, beads, etc.) one by one from the palm to the fingertips
- Hold pegs in palm of hand and bring each one to finger tips at a time to put in pegboard

Commercial games

- Hungry Hippo
- Hi Ho! Cherry-O
- Jacks, Marbles and Pick-up sticks
- Ready! Set! Spaghetti!
- Operation
- Connect 4
- Kerplunk
- Jenga
- Mr. and Mrs. Potato Head
- Froggy Feeding Fun
- Light Bright
- Etch a Sketch