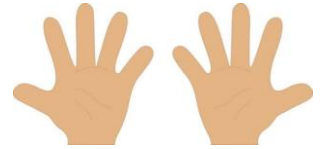


Fine Motor Skills

What is fine motor development?

From birth to eight years, children continually acquire, refine and consolidate their motor functions and skills and integrate their skills across domains (VEYLDF, 2016).

Fine motor skills control the way children use of the muscles in the fingers, hands and arms.



Why do we work on developing fine motor skills?

Fine motor skills are important for performing everyday tasks. We rely on our fine motor skills to perform self-care tasks such as dressing, toileting, cleaning teeth, using cutlery, opening lunch boxes and academic skills such as pencil skills, cutting skills, pasting as well as leisure activities (puzzles, painting, blocks).

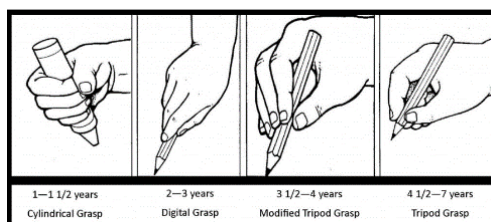


How can we improve fine motor skills?

Fine motor skills need to be considered in the context of the whole body. Core strength, shoulder stability and gross motor skills should be considered first to give the child the basis to improve their fine motor skills. Regular opportunity to practice new and challenging activities will support the development of fine motor skills. Activities that can support development include, threading and lacing, tongs and tweezers, play doh, craft, pegs, nuts and bolts, hole punchers, finger painting, droppers.

How will fine motor skill development benefit children at school?

Children require fine motor skill development for many of the activities undertaken at school. Such as opening/closing their lunch boxes, putting on jackets/jumpers/shoes/socks, navigating clothing whilst toileting, packing their bags, using scissors, using pencils/textas for writing and drawing. Fine motor skills will promote positive self-esteem for children as they will be able to independently complete tasks similar to their peers.



Fine Motor Skills Development

3

years old

- Strings four large beads
- Turns single pages of a book
- Snips with scissors
- Holds crayon with thumb and fingers (not fist)
- Shows one hand preference consistently in most activities
- Imitates circular, vertical, and horizontal strokes
- Paints with some wrist action, makes dots, lines, circular strokes
- Rolls, pounds, squeezes, and pulls playdough



4

years old

- Builds a tower of 7-9 blocks
- Established hand dominance
- Uses non dominant hand to assist in activities
- Holds a pencil in fingers – using 3 finger tripod grasp
- Draws with the arm and not small hand movements
- Draws a vertical line, horizontal line, cross and circle
- Cuts across paper with blunt scissors
- Puts together a simple puzzle of 4-12 pieces



5

years old

- Cuts out a square and circle following the line
- Pastes and glues appropriately
- Copies diagonal lines and an 'x'
- Colours within lines
- Uses a mature 3 fingered pencil grasp
- Can write name
- Can draw a person with 5 + body parts
- Can draw basic pictures **of blocks?**



6

years old

- Distinguishes between left and right
- Emerging directionality
- Forms most letters and numbers correctly
- Writes consistently on the lines
- Demonstrates controlled pencil movement
- Copies a triangle and intersecting diagonal lines
- Good endurance for writing
- Can build Lego, K'nex and other blocks independently



How to develop fine motor skills



Bilateral Coordination Skills

- Use peg boards
- Lacing cards, make bead necklaces or bracelets
- Building with Lego or blocks
- Tear construction paper for a collage
- Peeling stickers
- Spread icing on cookies or cupcakes
- Putting up to 12-piece puzzles together



Scissor Skills

- Cut straws into 3rds and use to make a necklace
 - Cut out circle, triangle, and square shapes
 - Cut out shopping catalogues
- Cutting with crinkle cut or design scissors
 - Cutting yarn
- Complete a cutting activity book



Pre-Writing Skills

- Use clothespins to pick up objects
- Pinch fruit loops and slide over toothpicks, Push beads onto pipe cleaners
- Form letters with play dough
- Trace letters in shaving cream
- Trace sandpaper letters
- Use letter stamps to form names



Fine Motor Control

- Button/unbutton large buttons on clothing or button board
 - Draw a person with at least 6 body parts included
 - Screw various size lids onto containers
 - Practice colouring within the lines
- Trace around their own hand with a pencil or crayon
 - Simple food preparation (measuring, stirring, cutting soft items with a butter knife)



Sensory Activities

- Finger painting colouring pages or a picture
- Popping large bubble wrap
- Playing with bread dough
- Planting flowers or plants in a garden
- Drawing in sand
- Washing dishes
- Drawing or tracing in couscous, rice, lentils etc.
- Playing with musical instruments (drum, piano, violin, recorder, etc.)