

Activities to Improve Fine Motor Skills:

To encourage crossing midline:

1. erasing white board with large sweeping motion
2. windshield wipers- arms above head, cross straight arms ten times like scissors then put bottom arm over top hand and do ten more times.
3. Scissor cuts- same as windshield wipers only arms are pointed straight down with palm up.
4. zippering coat
5. building with blocks and use both hands to balance the structure
6. lacing cards
7. Crawling obstacle course- crawl in and out of, over and under, up and down. (crawling is one of the first midline-crossing activities learned)
8. finger paint
9. shaving cream play
10. Play sorting games: place objects to sort on the left side and containers to place them in on the right side: sort coins, cars vs. trucks, pompoms, marbles, bingo chips, etc.
11. Steering wheel (found in many playgrounds): encouraging using the same hand to turn the wheel all the way around
12. Alternating hand-over-hand activities such as pulling along a rope while on a scooter board
13. Make figure 8's and other motions with streamers; one hand at a time and crossing left and right
14. With a group of friends, play circle games to music while sitting crossed legged on the floor, such as passing a balloon or ball, toy, etc.
15. Play body awareness games like the Hokey Pokey and Simon Says

To improve finger/hand strength

1. play with silly putty or modeling clay
2. use plant sprayer or any spray bottle- clean desks or board
3. opening containers with lids of different sizes (screw tops and flip tops)
4. using wind up toys
5. place clothespins on a container
6. Tear paper and roll into small balls and glue on paper
7. wring out sponges

Fine motor coordination:

1. Sort small objects (beans, buttons, and beads) place them in a small container.
2. use tweezers or tongs to sort
3. use eye droppers to transfer water from one container to another
4. snap beads
5. clay/putty- roll into balls, make a snake or hot dogs
6. sand
7. clothespins
8. easy paint tube brushes

9. stamps and stamp pads
10. stickers
11. puzzles
12. pegs
13. crumple paper or paper towels

In hand manipulation:

1. Hold a pile of coins, pegs or paper clips. While holding on to several of the chosen objects, move one to the fingertip and plane it into a small opening or slot.
2. Place money into a slotted bank.

Grip on Pencil

People hold pencils and other writing tools in a variety of ways. The most common grip is called a "tripod" grip. This involves pinching the pencil between the pads of the thumb and index finger while the pencil rests on the side of the middle finger. Many people use a quadripod grip which is similar except two fingers are on top of the pencil opposing the thumb and the pencil rests on the side of the ring finger.

1. when coloring, drawing and writing use short writing and drawing tools such as broken crayons, golf pencils, Pip Squeak markers, short colored pencils or small bits of chalk
2. Use a pencil grip for proper placement of fingers

Writing on Lines

If your child has difficulty using writing lines effectively, here are some strategies:

1. Highlight the bottom half of the line. Instruct the child to "stay in the yellow" (or whatever colored was used) for all the small letters; tall letters start at the top line and descending letters dive down from the middle.
2. Darken the lines to increase awareness; sometimes copying paper on the darkest setting will make the lines easier to see.
3. Create a raised base (bottom) line by using glue once it's dry or Wikki Stix. Use the clear color changing marker on the base line, then write with a color marker in the set. When the color has changed the child knows he/she has reached the bottom line. There are a variety of paper styles and modifications available for purchase. Talk to your child's therapist for recommendations.
4. On lined paper, in the left margin draw a simple house: the roof (a triangle) is within the top half of the line, the house is a square within the bottom half, below the house is the basement. Tall letters start in the attic, short letters are inside the house and descending letters go down to the basement.

Work can be completed in various positions:

1. at a desk
2. taped to wall
3. laying on stomach on floor or on knees at a table.