

# Hand Dexterity

Fine motor dexterity is the ability to perform small, precise hand movements with fluency and accuracy; using the small muscles of the hand. It is based on efficient development of a variety of foundation skills e.g. proprioception, tactile processing, proximal stability, in-hand manipulation, the development of the hand arches and muscle strength. We use these foundation skills to move small objects within the hand or use tools with precise detail. Hand dexterity is important when writing.

## Helpful strategies

- Begin with larger activities involving one object
- When more objects are required, add them slowly
- Demonstrate to the child how to complete the activity
- Talk about what the fingers need to do

## Activity Ideas

- Encourage weight bearing through the hands to promote hand strength – flat hand printing, games on all fours, animal walks etc.
- Use pegs, ice tongs or tweezers to pick up small objects such as cotton balls, pompoms, bead, etc. and place into a container or make a collage.
- Pop bubble wrap using thumb and index finger.
- Water guns and squirt toys are fun and can be played with outdoors for summer fun as well as in the bathtub.



- Sticker activities, such as sticker books or sticker line up – draw an interesting line and have your child place stickers along the line.
- Posting coins into a piggy bank.



- Sort out the toolbox, putting screws, nuts and bolts in order, threading nuts onto the ends of bolts.
- Tear paper into small strips and scrunch into balls, place and glue on paper to make a mosaic/collage. Use a variety of materials and textures; e.g. tissue paper, beads, cotton wool etc.
- Origami for folding and pressing.
- Play with construction toys, which need to be snapped together and pulled apart. Such as Stickle bricks, magnetic blocks, lego, k'nex.
- Playing board games or other games with small manipulative pieces e.g. checker, battleships, snakes and ladders, Jenga, Pick up Sticks etc.

