

Fine Motor Development and Activities for Home!

Hello! My name is Kate Siegel and I am the Occupational Therapist for Hanscom Schools. Everyday in Kindergarten, your child is learning and practicing their handwriting. There are six building blocks that serve as the foundation for printing and writing. In order for your child to continue to learn and develop their skills necessary for reading and writing, it is important for you to know how you can help your child have a successful school year.

The Six Building Blocks

1. **Sitting Posture** - Your child needs to be able to sit upright in their chair without using their arms for support
2. **Shoulder Development** - Your child needs to have good shoulder stability to be able to move and control their arm and hand movements.
3. **Arm and Hand Control** - Your child needs to have enough strength in their arms and hands to be able to control objects they are holding or manipulating.
4. **Pencil Grasp** - Proper sitting posture, shoulder strength and finger control will allow your child to use an appropriate grasp when holding a crayon or pencil.
5. **Bilateral Hand Skills** - Refers to the ability to use your hands together to accomplish a task. This is necessary for writing (one hand writes while the other prevents the paper from slipping) and cutting (one hand holds the scissors while the other hand holds or turns the paper).
6. **Visual Motor Control** - Visual motor control is the ability to coordinate your eyes, arms and hands to complete fine motor activities.

Fun Activities for Home!

1. **Sitting Posture & Shoulder Strengthening Activities**
 - Pushing heavy objects (chairs, bags of leaves, shoveling snow, raking leaves, taking out the garbage, carrying in groceries)
 - Pushing/Pulling games
 - Wheelbarrow walk
 - Animal walks (bear walk, crab crawl, snake crawl, donkey kicks)
 - Crawling hide and seek
 - Cooking (kneading dough, stirring cake mixture, rolling dough)
 - Working on vertical surfaces (finger paint on an easel, finger paint using shaving cream in the shower, drawing, coloring or writing on an easel, etc.)
 - Lying on their stomachs using their elbows to prop them up while listening to a story, coloring, drawing, writing, watching TV (Encourage your child to keep their chest off the ground when lying on their stomachs)
 - Blowpens (these special mouth markers will increase your child's stomach muscles, which will help increase their posture and fine motor development!)

2. **Hand and Finger Strength & Coordination (which will help your child develop the appropriate pencil grasp)**
 - Lacing or threading activities (macaroni, straws, blocks, etc)
 - Paper tearing (to make or decorate a picture or frame)
 - Using tongs, tweezers or clothespins to pick up small objects
 - Use water bottles to spray sidewalk chalk, windows, to pop bubbles, etc (squeezing water bottles really target the same muscles needed for coloring and cutting!)
 - Cutting thick constructions paper for crafts
 - Peeling the wrappers off of crayons and break their crayons (using small pieces of chalk, crayons or golf pencils strengthens your child's finger and wrist muscles!)
 - Play Games with small pieces (Bed Bugs, Hi Ho Cherrio, LEGOS, Operation, Pick up sticks)
 - Making eyedropper paintings
 - Shaving cream or finger painting pictures
 - Playing with Play-Doh or clay

3. Bilateral Hand Activities

- Crawling races
- Craft activities (cutting, gluing, tracing, mazes)
- Lacing or threading objects
- Cooking (kneading, stirring, rolling, whisking)
- Games using use of two hands (Twister & Simon Says)
- Ball games
- Playing with Play-Doh and clay

4. Visual Motor Activities

- Mazes
- Dot to Dots
- Tracing over straight and curvy lines
- LEGOS and making block designs
- Writing letters and numbers in shaving cream, finger paint, pudding, sand, gak
- Puzzles

Activities that encourage your child to use their shoulder, stomach, arm and hand muscles are beneficial! By incorporating some of these activities into your child's home routine will help increase their success in school. 😊

Please call me if you have any questions! 781-274-7721 ext 233.

Have fun!

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