

Talking Matters

www.talkingmatters.com.au Ph: 8255 7137
Helping your child to reach their potential



Strengthening hand and finger muscles

Fingers and hands need to be strong in order to write neatly and to write at the required speed. Children who do not have strong finger and hand muscles become tired quickly and may have uncoordinated drawings and handwriting. It also allows children to cut with scissors properly and manipulate other hand tools for activities such as typing.

To increase muscle strength gradually increase the amount of time spent doing an activity, provide resistance against movement and repeat specific movements for extended periods of time.



Activities that develop hand and finger strength include:

- Play dough/Clay/Plasticine play with a variety of tools. You can squash plasticine into a baking tray and use this for practising drawing and writing. “Erase” by rubbing with fingertips.
- Cooking activities involving kneading and mixing rolling, beating, sprinkling, decorating cakes or biscuits.
- Hole punching and stapling activities.
- Stamping activities or stamp texts.
- Spray bottles (spray flowers in the garden or fill with paint for a different art experience). You could knock small plastic animals down. Use index and middle fingers in the trigger.
- Water play involving squeezing sponges, pouring cups.
- Games involving the use of tongs/teabag squeezers. Fish for items (such as sponges/ping pong balls) in water, or move small objects from container to container (beads, peas, smarties, blocks)
- Tweezers are smaller again and could be used to pick up items like mini marshmallows.
- Clothes pegs are a common item that can be used to develop hand strength. You could put pegs on a line/container according to colour, or you might attach letters to pegs and spell words.
- Games such as Trouble, Hungry Hippos and Beetle.
- Scrunch paper basketball. Rip/tear pages from old magazines, scrunch into a ball and “shoot a hoop” into a washing basket or similar. Start with using two hands to scrunch then try one at a time. Avoid using tummy/furniture to help.
- Hammering activities (into soft wood or foam).
- Tearing/ripping paper or magazines, perhaps to make a collage
- Screwing/Unscrewing jars or containers. You may place items inside such as craft materials or highly desired food items.
- Wind up or jack in the box toys
- Constructional activities such as Lego/Duplo/Mecchano/Kinnex
- Origami
- Playing with elastic bands
- Cutting through different textures of paper

