



waitingwell

with The Owl Centre **Charity**

PAEDIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ADVICE

HAND STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

- Sit with the palms of the hands together, fingers spread, push the elbows out to sides of the body. Repeat a few times.
- Sit with fingers interlaced – stretch arms out in front of the body pushing the palms of the hands forward away from the body. Repeat a few times.
- Stand an arms distance away from the wall. Lean on the wall with the hands flat on it – keeping the arms straight, use fingers to push away from the wall to get an upright position.
- Theraputty activities:
 - Stretch theraputty into a ring. Place tips of fingers into the ring and stretch 10 times.
 - Squeeze theraputty with the whole hand 10-20 times with each hand.
 - Roll the theraputty into a ball and poke the ball with the dominant index finger.
 - Roll the theraputty into a sausage shape and pinch small pieces of the putty along the sausage ridge using the thumb and index finger.
 - Roll the sausage into a snail shape.
 - Push 5 pegs into the putty then pull them out and place them into a pegboard.
 - Using each finger in turn, poke and press the theraputty to spread it out thinly onto the table top.

ISOLATING FINGER MOVEMENT

- Pointing games:
 - Pointing to objects in the distance / pictures
 - Drawing pictures with pointing finger in shaving cream / sand / paint
 - Finger puppets
 - Pointing to facial features in mirror
 - Popping soap bubbles in air
 - Painting face on index finger and make it talk / move
 - Playing toy piano with index finger
 - Using light switch or elevator buttons



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- Counting small objects on table – coins / beads / straws
- Poking games
 - Pushing play-dough into egg carton sections
 - Poking holes in play-dough to bury / dig out sultanas / seeds etc
 - Playing with an abacus
 - Dialing the telephone
 - Pasting pictures / collage pushing object down with index finger
 - Pushing small plastic toys under water with index finger

HAND STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

Finger dexterity involves being able to grasp or manipulate objects in the hands and fingers with precision and accuracy. This is a skill children can learn through play and it is through repetition and practice that their movements become:

- More refined i.e. to pick up smaller objects
- More accurate with the manipulation or placement of objects
- Faster at being able to complete tasks while maintaining accuracy

The following activities involve finger dexterity. Allow the child to practice the activity so they are proficient at the task. Then try to increase their speed at the task while maintaining their accuracy and precision. These activities can be times with the child competing against themselves initially and perhaps later against a sibling or peer. Most children enjoy the novelty of a stopwatch or timer.

- 20-30 matches and a matchbox – placing matches into matchboxes as quickly as possible (if safety is an issue or children who mouth objects- do not use)
- Shoe box or ice cream container and 24 spring clothes pegs – placing pegs around the top of the box using index finger and thumb to open and close them
- 10 plastic coins and 10 empty matchboxes. Open each box, place one coin inside and close box
- Plastic Bolts, nuts or wing nuts – screw ten nuts onto bolts as quickly as possible
- Bead and lace – threading beads as quickly as possible. Use large beads to begin with then progress to smaller ones



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- 20-40 Lego pieces – fit pieces together as quickly as possible. Take them apart. Make familiar shapes or objects as quickly as possible
- Tracing a maze without taking the pencil off the paper and staying within the lines.
- Craft activities such as small pegs that make up a picture or hammer beads(these require precise fine motor skills and can be easily swallowed if this is an issue for your child)
- Completing simple jigsaw puzzles as quickly as possible
- Plastic jumping frogs using index finger to make them jump-available for ELC city mall
- Finger puppets / glove puppets
- Clapping games / finger rhymes
- Musical instruments – keyboard / recorder / guitar / piano
- Messy play – play-dough, mashed potato, finger paint