Fun with Fine Motor!
Engaging Young Learners in Meaningful Fine Motor Experiences

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Did You Know?
Research is showing that in general, children spend less time than they used to involved in “messy play” such as modeling with playdough or being crafty with scissors and glue.

• It is becoming clear that children who spent too much time on touchscreens did not develop the fine motor skills they needed when it came time to learn to write

Using Chopsticks

• Use the chopsticks to pick up the small objects on your table.

• If you already know how to use chopsticks, try using them in your non-dominant hand.

Motor Development

• Children develop strength and control in their large muscles before they do in their small muscles (e.g., muscle control develops in the trunk, legs, and arms before it develops in wrists, hands, and fingers).

• Motor abilities begin with general skills, which become more specific and defined as children get older.

• Between the ages of three and five, children gain strength and coordination in their hands, as well as ability in using their thumb with their index or middle finger.

Children’s preference for screen time over craft time has been blamed for a drop in fine motor skills.
Fine Motor Skills

- Children demonstrate dexterity and hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.
- With time and experience, children develop fine-motor movements (e.g., holding, squeezing, poking, smoothing, positioning, writing, cutting) needed to manipulate materials and tools.
- As they practice manipulating objects, children develop hand-eye coordination (e.g., stacking blocks, assembling puzzles, stringing beads, pouring juice).

Teacher Support Strategies

- Provide materials and activities that require children to use their fingers and hands.
- Provide similar objects in different sizes and textures to support children as they develop more control over their fine-motor movements (e.g., Legos and Duplos of various sizes, different sized beads).
- Support children at their current developmental level and give them time to practice and gain muscle strength.
- Suggest and model ways of holding and manipulating tools; do not correct children, but demonstrate how to use tools correctly.

Hand Strengthening Building Activity

You’ll need just two materials for this activity: Jenga pieces and a handful of rubber bands in different sizes. And that’s it!

Show your kids how to wrap the rubber bands around the wooden blocks in different ways. Let them get creative with building and creating.

The importance of Pretend Writing

https://playtolearnpreschool.us/pretend-writing/
Why Should Kids Work on a Vertical Surface?

https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/motor-skills-and-more-working-on-a-vertical-surface/

100 Household Items for Fine Motor Skills

https://happybrownhouse.com/100-household-items-for-fine-motor-skills/

35 Hand Strengthening activities for kids

https://theinspiredtreehouse.com/hand-strength-35-fun-activities-for-kids/

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