

Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills involve the use of the smaller muscles of the hand such as when your child uses pencils, scissors or ties their shoelaces.

Difficulties with these skills can compromise your child's performance at school, their confidence and independence in life skills like getting dressed or feeding themselves.

Activities that can support your child's fine motor skills development include:

- ✓ Construction, e.g. Lego, building blocks
- ✓ Play dough
- ✓ Threading or lacing activities
- ✓ Manipulation games, e.g. Pick-up Sticks and Connect Four
- ✓ Drawing/writing games, e.g. Pictionary
- ✓ Craft activities using glue, paper, board, egg cartons, string, tape etc.

Some behaviours that may suggest your child requires some support with fine motor skills:

- awkward pencil grasp
- avoidance of or refusal to participate in writing, colouring, drawing and construction activities
- messy drawing or writing
- fatiguing easily
- choppy use of scissors
- difficulty doing up buttons and shoe laces
- difficulty completing pencil-based tasks in a timely manner

Typical developmental stages in fine motor skills:

Age (year)	Typical Developmental Stages
1 – 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makes scribbles
2 – 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copies vertical lines• Builds a tower of four to six blocks
3 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snips paper with scissors• Copies circles
4 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writes name and the numbers 1 to 5• Handedness is well established• Copies letters
5 – 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Colours within lines• Uses three-finger grasp of pencil• Can paste and glue
6 – 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forms most numbers and letters correctly• Writes consistently on lines
7 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintains legible handwriting when writing a story

An Occupational Therapist can support children with the development of various skills required for fine motor skills, such as:

- building up strength in their hands, the core and larger muscles of the body
- supporting coordination, body awareness, position and seating
- prescribing aids and assistive equipment
- supporting their confidence and persistence when learning new skills
- applying new skills to the practical aspects of daily life, e.g. learning to dress independently or using a knife and fork

For further information about Fabic Occupational Therapy Services,
please visit www.fabic.com.au or contact us on 07 5530 5099.