

Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Motor Skills

The following activities will help your future Kindergartener to build strength and dexterity and support fine and visual motor development. These skills are necessary prerequisites for developing a proper pencil grasp and producing legible print in Kindergarten.

Body Stability:

- Play on playground, hang from monkey bars, slide, swing, spin
- Wheelbarrow walks, crab walks, rides bikes
- Play catch with different sized balls

Hand Dominance:

- Provide lots of activities that incorporate the use of both hands together: stringing, lacing, tearing, zipping, buttoning, dressing, stirring, wiping tables
- Teach them directionalities on their bodies: right vs. left, top/bottom/middle, front/back (play Simon Says or Twister)

Hand Strengthening:

- Pop bubble wrap using only the thumb and index fingers
- Screw and unscrew a variety of lid sizes, or nuts/bolts
- Manipulate fasteners: zippers, buttons, snaps on clothing
- Open packages and containers to get food and toys
- Make small balls of playdough/clay with one hand using tips of fingers

Grasp:

- Use small, broken crayons or chalk, golf pencils, short markers (Pip Squeak by Crayola) to encourage 3 fingers on the utensil (ring and pinky finger tucked into palm)
- have child hold a marble or small piece of sponge in the palm of the hand with the ring and little fingers while performing a variety of activities such as:
 - ✓ Lacing beads, cereal or pasta noodles on string, cutting, drawing, coloring
- Pick up small objects (pennies, beads, beans) and flip over or pick up to place into container
- Play finger games: Where is Thumbkin? Itsy, Bitsy Spider...
- Rip paper (junk mail)

Cutting: "Thumbs up, 7-up"

- Keep ring and pinky finger tucked in
- Start with narrow width paper and thicker, move to wider and thinner
- Use variety of textures (straws, junk mail, playdough)