

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine motor practice can occur anywhere and involves the manipulation of toys, objects and materials, and can also be practiced in the development of self-care and other daily living skills including 'jobs'.

Try not to isolate fine motor skills into exercises. Activities should have meaning to the student.



Basic Guidelines and where to start:

- Involve your student within an activity that you are doing.
- Try to make activities fun and motivating. This is a good time to introduce choice making into the activity, keeping in mind your student's attention span.
- Use your student's motivators to 'get him/her interested' in fine motor activities. Be creative and make sure that s/he will have a finished product to show others.
- Build on activities that your student likes to do and 'up the ante' using backward chaining, prompting and fading, hand over hand or hand under hand strategies (see PISP website at www.pisp.ca) to encourage your student to stretch his/her abilities.
- When trying more complex fine motor skills(e.g. making cookies, painting, building, etc.) make sure that your student has sufficient postural support including trunk, feet, forearm, etc. to be successful.

- Remember, repetition and practice are good teachers and a sure guide for success.
- Build new skills on old ones.
- Be consistent and allow time for practice each day where possible.
- Be sure that your student uses his/her fine motor skills in all routines including self care routines, chores, school routines and of course games and 'down times'.
- Have an expectation: expect your student to have jobs where he/she can practice his/her fine motor skills and use strategies to make your student successful (e.g. collecting the attendance - gradually give the student more responsibility within the job).
- If your student likes to 'fidget' with a toy or particular object, encourage him/her to do so at appropriate times. Fidgets help build strength, endurance and flexibility. Along the way it may also help in developing and building other fine motor skills such as holding, grasping, releasing, in-hand manipulation, etc.

Remember, all activities hold the potential for fine motor skill development, and activities should be functional and have a successful outcome for the student.

