Occupational Therapy

Fine Motor Activities

For handwriting/pre-handwriting and grip strength

Playing with playdough, biscuit dough or theraputty – You can knead it, squeeze it, roll it or use your favourite cutters.

Example activities-

- Make as many dough sausages as you can. Then cut up the sausages with scissors or a safety knife.
- You could also make a bird's nest by rolling some of your playdough into a ball, flattening it and then pinching around the edges with your thumb and fingers, then you could make some eggs for your nest by rolling the rest of your playdough into balls.

Duplo, LEGO or Construction sets - a fun activity that helps encourage push and pull techniques.

Hand strengthening activities-

Squeezing soft balls (e.g. stress balls, sensory balls) – Try squeezing as many times as you can in one minute, then try again with your other hand.
You could then try firmer balls (e.g. tennis ball) as your strength increases.

Paper scrunching - Scrunch up some sheets of scrap paper into balls. Then try flicking them into a bin or at a target using your index finger (pointer) and thumb. (Gently throw them if flicking is too tricky).

Using tweezers or pincer grip to organise objects -

Example activities-

- Pom poms into bowls (also a great colour sorting activity).
- Coins into a piggy bank.
- Dried beans placed onto shapes drawn on a large sheet of paper.

Cotton buds and cardboard can be used to create both patterns and pictures -
You could poke some small holes into the cardboard (e.g. top of a shoe box) to form a pattern and then push the cotton buds through the holes, painting or colouring the buds if you'd like to. Or simply use the cotton buds to create a beautiful dot picture.

Everyday activities to support fine motor skills

During bath time encourage your child to help squeeze liquid out of bottles or squeeze water out of a flannel/sponge.

Helping to water the plants with the use of a spray bottle.

Getting dressed and undressed by themselves, assisting younger siblings. Especially when different fastenings are available to practise with, including tying shoe laces.

Carrying shopping bags with one hand.

Cooking/baking – mixing, sifting, kneading, using a rolling pin or pastry cutters.
Peeling and cutting up fruit or vegetables. Starting with softer foods e.g. bananas or cucumbers, then building up to firmer foods like carrots or potatoes.
Using a grater - again starting with soft foods like cheese and then building up to firmer foods like a carrot.
Juicing oranges or lemons by hand.
For coordination- pouring a drink from a jug to cup or spooning food from a saucepan to a bowl/plate.

These are just a few things you and your child/children could have fun doing together at home to support their motor skills. If you have any questions or would like any further information relating to the above or Occupational Therapy as a whole, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.
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Enjoy and have fun!