



April is OT Month!

How you can help students develop **FINE MOTOR** skills.

What are fine motor skills?

Fine motor refers to control over the small muscles of the hands and fingers, muscles of the face and mouth (tongue), and the feet. But generally, fine motor skills are focused on the small muscles in the hands.

What does it look like if your student has poor fine motor skills?

- ✧ Aversion to pencil and paper activities
- ✧ Difficulty tying shoes
- ✧ Difficulty using eating utensils
- ✧ Poor self-esteem
- ✧ Difficulty with handwriting (messy or slow at writing, immature pencil grasp for their age)
- ✧ May have difficulty building with blocks or manipulating small objects in the hand.
- ✧ May overly enjoy outdoor playtime and physical activity but avoid seated table activities.

How can you help your student develop fine motor skills?

- ✧ Designate a few minutes for pre-handwriting exercises such as finger gymnastics before handwriting activities (touch each finger to the thumb, make a fist then spread fingers out, walk fingers across table like a spider).
- ✧ Have students write with short pencils (about 4 inches) to promote proper pencil grasps.
- ✧ Allow opportunities for writing on the board or laying on stomach to improve wrist/shoulder stability and hand strengthening.
- ✧ Pick beads or buttons out of putty or Play-doh during free time or indoor recess.
- ✧ Provide flexible seating options like yoga or stability balls to promote core strengthening which aids in fine motor development.

