

Three Activities to Improve Your Hand Strength Skills

Hole / Thumb Punch

You need

A variety of paper types and a single hole punch.

How to do it

Start with thinner straight edged paper, ask your child to hold the paper in one hand and the single hole punch in the other. The hole punch needs to be held between their thumb and fingers, with the thumb on top of the hole punch supported underneath by the fingers, NOT on the table. The palm of the hand needs to be facing upwards NOT down towards the table. The paper should also be held and manipulated (moved) in the same way with the thumb on top of the paper and the fingers underneath supporting the paper.

Punch a line of holes along one side of the paper and then swap and use the hole punch in the other hand along another side of the paper. This activity can be made into a time challenge task. How many holes can they make in a minute?

Gradually introduce different 'thickness' of paper to increase the level of challenge.



Clothes Pegs

You need

A range of pegs and bulldog clips, string or washing line, an odd selection of clothes and a timer.

How to do it

Start off with pegs or clips that your child can manage fairly easily, using more challenging ones as their hand strength improves.

Encourage your child to place the pegs/clips onto different thickness of materials and positions, such as : around the top of a box, up the edge of a curtain, on their jumper or top, or around pieces of card of different 'thickness' and shape (circles, flowers, stars).

Alternate the hands being used to develop strength in both hands. Also vary the fingers used in the pincer grip for pegging/clipping. Start with thumb and index finger, as your child's strength improves use each finger in turn to squeeze the peg/clip open.



Squirter Activities

You need

A water squirting bath toy, a variety of paper types, blu tac, straws and coins.

How to do it

The squirter is used without water, it is the puffs of air that can be created when these toys are squeezed which is important. All sorts of racing games can be created to encourage your child to squeeze the toys helping to develop hand strength.

Fish Racing- cut out fish shapes in different types of paper, curl the tails slightly as this will help the fish move along the table/floor when the air is blown behind it rather than it being pinned to the table. Start with small paper fish with curled tails and then move to larger, heavier ones.

Bath Time/ Outdoor Fun- These toys can be used as intended as water squirters for target games and pattern drawing in the bath or outside.

