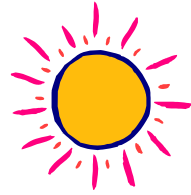


## Fine motor fun in the sun



Fine motor activities don't have to be sitting and working on printing books all day long. You can improve your child's fine motor skills with a little planning and have fun at the same time.

### **Did you know that playing at the playground can help your child's fine motor skills?**

Activities such as playing on the monkey bars, wheelbarrow walks, playing tug of war and throwing a ball all help to develop strength and balance. Enjoy your local playground! Take frequent movement breaks.

**We LEARN when we MOVE!!!!** These activities help make brain connections between the two sides of the body. Running, walking, rolling (down a hill or across the kitchen floor, crawling, laying on your tummy and crawling in place like a bug in mud, rolling belly on a therapy ball back and forth). Use these movement activities while learning education concepts like letters, eg. Match apple to A, grab the apple picture roll across the floor and match it to the letter, same could be done reaching with belly on the ball).

**Sidewalk Chalk.** An inexpensive way to working on colouring and writing that kids love. Try dipping chalk in a dish of water and see what bright colours your child can make. Draw a giant bulls-eye and throw beanbags and aim for the middle. Make a giant tic-tac-toe grid or hopstoch.

**Don't like to colour?** Use Crayola decoder markers and get your child to uncover secret messages you have made up for them. Window markers are also a fun way to get your child to colour and draw.

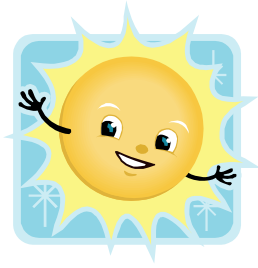
### **Help your child make a list of the things they want to do this summer.**

**Make necklaces.** Find some beads (the dollar stores have sets of beads). Make a necklace that you can wear all summer long. Remember the smaller the beads, the harder it will be to make. So adjust it for your child. Start with bigger beads, or use a variety of sizes.



**Leaf rubbings are fun!** Pick leaves from different trees or plants. Place them between two pieces of a paper. Colour on the trop sheet with a crayon.

**Paper airplanes** are a fun way to work on scissor skills and folding. Whose flies the furthest?



**Encourage your child** to open the containers he or she uses. Opening popsicle wrappers is a great way to work on fine motor skills! Give them hand over hand assistance to learn the pattern of the movement.

**Make a scrapbook** together of all the fun things that they did this summer. It works on printing, cutting, gluing and is a great keepsake.

**Cut and paste from flyers a list of school supplies or grocery list;** or if you child is new to cutting, just let them cut up all your flyers, no worries about lines or being neat.

**Make shapes and letters** in creative ways (drawing in sand, dirt, “painting” with water on the fence, chalk, paint, use your body to make the shape). Practice all the pre- printing shapes, O, I, -, +, X, Square and Triangle.

**Letters can be fun,** be sure to teach your child how to make letters top to bottom, and left to right. Help them plan their space, give them a box to put each letter in or a word. Give them a starting dot if they are unsure of where to start. Let your child imitate and copy over your letters, always using the words “Start at the top!”, “Top to Bottom”.

**Lego** is a great fine motor toy. See who can build the biggest tower. Make something out of Lego and have your child copy what you made.

**Make a mural.** Hang up a large piece of paper in your house. Make a seascape or beach scene or any other place your child wants to draw. Drawing on a wall or other vertical surface works on shoulder and wrist strength to support printing.

**Other Ideas:** painting with spray bottles, wind up toys, using eye droppers, clothes peg games, blowing bubbles (holding the bottle and the wand at the same time), using tongs to sort items, imaginative play.

**Have fun!**

If you have concerns about your child’s development, call the Children’s CARE Centre at 388-6575 or your local health unit.