

**Physical Strategies****4. Demonstrates fine motor skills**

- Engage the child in activities that encourage them to move their fingers individually, e.g., finger-plays, pointing at pictures.
- Provide activities to strengthen the hand grasp and release, e.g., using squirt bottles, medicine droppers, punching holes, using clothespins, and handling play dough.
- Include activities that support eye-hand coordination, e.g., stringing beads on pipe cleaners or laces, picking up objects with tongs or tweezers, placing various sized pegs in holes, and folding paper. Encourage folding paper into halves, fourths, very small, etc., and/or to create shapes or animals.
- Include activities that require using two hands together, e.g., tearing paper, opening and closing containers, using wind-up toys.
- Have the child watch as you demonstrate a task and describe the steps.
- Take advantage of self-care activities (e.g., hand washing, scraping plates, putting on gloves) to support the development of a child's fine-motor skills.
- Give simple, clear, verbal instructions and physically guide, model, or use picture cues to help children perform tasks successfully.
- Provide small sponges for the child to squeeze water out of using only one hand; alternate hands.
- Include practice of taking marker tops off and recapping using fingertips and thumb rather than the whole hand.
- Integrate sock puppets into dramatic play activities; open and close the mouth at varying speeds and widths.
- Hang up a clothesline along a wall where a child can reach and have the child hang artwork on clothesline by practicing opening and closing using the thumb and each of the fingers
- Provide various size cups and have the child pour water from one cup to another when in the bath or pool
- Increase opportunities to manipulate fingers (use of the thumb, index and middle fingers) with the following activities:
  - pop bubble wrap
  - pinch off small pieces of play-dough
  - play peg games (Lite Brite)
  - play games such as 'tug of war' with coffee stirrers or straws using only thumb and index finger to hold the tip of the straw.
  - screw and unscrew nuts and bolts (plastic version can be purchased in plumbing section of hardware store)