



REGIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

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Activities to improve hand strength and dexterity

Category	Activities
TOYS	resistive buttons and levers, leggos, tinker toys or any other small resistive interconnecting toy
GAMES	lite brite, operation, hungry hippos, bedbugs, connect 4, ants in the pants, jenga, pickup sticks, rubber bands with geoboard, different card games
ARTS & CRAFTS	scissoring skills and cutting through different resistive paper, lacing different sized beads, fruit loops or pasta, tearing paper, squeezing glue bottles, making objects out of clay, using eye droppers or cooking basters, using different types of markers, crayons, pencils, or chalk, sewing, weaving, macramé
ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING	buttoning, snapping and zipping, putting on shirts, pants and socks, putting on and tying shoes, brushing teeth, opening tooth paste, putting coat on and off, opening screw top, pop top and baggy containers, opening and closing doors, turning on and off water faucets, washing dishes, wiping tables and other cleaning activities; cooking such as stirring and mixing cookie dough where there is a lot of resistance and hand strength is needed to hang onto the tool, peeling fruit, carrots or potatoes, using egg beaters and mashers
FUNCTIONAL USE OF SCHOOL MATERIALS	tearing tape off of a tape dispenser, rolling up art work or poster and placing a rubber band around it, using a ruler to measure, tearing perforated pages out of a workbook, tablet, or spiral notebook, stapling papers together, removing staples using staple remover, using a hole punch in a targeted location, paper clipping papers together, sharpening pencils with a manual pencil sharpener, opening three ring binder, placing papers in then closing binder, folding paper neatly and placing in envelope
TOOL USE	hammer and nail, screwdrivers, pliers, and nuts and bolts activities. Use of garden tools such as shovel, hoe, rake. Most hand tools are pretty safe as long as kids have supervision and are taught how to use the tool correctly
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	swinging, climbing, tug of war, trapeze play, riding a bike, playing ball, yard work, gardening, pulling weeds, carrying and stacking firewood, caring for animals

Remember it is important that kids get opportunities to practice with hand strengthening activities regularly throughout the day. When an activity is new or difficult for a child an adult might start the task or partially complete the task and then let the child finish. This way the child can feel successful and may be willing to try again.