

Ideas and Hints for Families Working with your Children at Home Fine Motor

String pasta on a piece of yarn or pipe cleaner. Have your child sort the pieces by shape and/or size and count how many he/she put on the pipe cleaner.

Cut a shape out of paper and have your child trace around it.

Stickers - Have your child pick up stickers and paste them on a piece of paper. Describe the different stickers that your child is using. Encourage your child to find all the stickers that are the same.

Cookie cutters - Cut out cookies from playdough with cookie cutters. Talk about the different shapes. Describe how you roll out the dough and flatten to cut it with the cookie cutters.

Snack on a Handle: Have your child use pretzel sticks to spear bite size pieces of fruit. Set up a pattern (ex: pineapple/banana/pineapple/banana) and see if your child can imitate it.

Using crayons - Give your child crayons and paper to trace around body parts.

Painting with Jello - Pour out powdered Jell-O on a paper or cookie sheet. Add water and have your child paint with it with his/her fingers. Ask your child to describe how the gelatin feels as he/she finger-paints—slippery, wet, sticky, grainy.

Using Hands and Fingers - Snap your fingers/Clap your hands to the beat of a song.

Puppets - Make a sock puppet by painting eyes, mouth and nose with a marker. Use the puppet to make up a story with your child.

Ribbons - Cut ribbons, curl pieces – glue onto paper. Encourage your child to make a design with the ribbons. Talk about the colors and length of the ribbons.

Marble Painting: Put paper on bottom of a box -Put glob of paint on paper-- put in marble-roll back & forth. Have your child roll the marble fast and slow.

Leaf Prints: Place the leaves under paper and rub a crayon over it. Use a variety of leaves and fill up the page with rubbings.

Magic Bubble Bags (see #2 attached)

Have your child tell you what he/she sees. You can add scent to it and have him/her smell it. Have him/her squish it with his/her hands and tell you how it feels.

Watering flowers - Have your child water your flowers with a spray bottle. Show them how to squeeze the pump to make the water come out. Let them use two hands if they need to.

Drums - Give your child 2 wooden spoons and a pot – “Drum” to the beat of a song. Keep a pot and spoons for yourself. Listen to some music and hit the beat on the bottom of the pot. Wait and watch for your child to do the same. Beat so the sound is louder and softer.

Bubbles: Blow a big stream of bubbles for your child. Have your child run after them and pop them with his/her fingers.

Paint the sidewalk with water and brushes. Take a few buckets or containers of water outside. Gather a variety of paint brushes (ones for painting the house and for painting a picture.) “Paint” the water on the sidewalk or on a wall. Add food coloring to the water and “paint” some more. Rinse it off with plain water.

Tear and Glue -Prepare paper for your child to tear & paste on a paper plate. Get a variety of papers...paper towels, magazine pages, construction paper, plain white paper, tissues. Show them how to tear pieces off. Tear with them. Then glue the papers on a whole sheet of paper to make a collage or picture. Hints: If your child does not like to touch the glue, let him/her use a cotton swab or paintbrush initially.

Clothespins - Have your child clip clothespins around a can or box. See if they can hang pictures under the clips to make a family photo can or box.

Shaving Cream - Draw lines, trace happy faces, with shaving cream. Add food coloring. Squeeze some shaving cream onto a flat surface (use a cookie sheet for easy clean-up). Have fun using your fingers to draw pictures in the shaving cream.

Finger-painting with pudding: Take a small dish of pudding and use a spoon to put it on a piece of foil or waxed paper or a cookie sheet. Spread it out with your hands. Make circles, lines, a path, and letters.

Scented Playdough (see #3 attached)

Roll playdough into long tubes. Make snakes out of playdough and have your child cut them with a plastic knife or scissors.

Draw with chalk on sidewalk. Make lines & shapes. Attach the chalk to a toy car or truck - make sure that the chalk is touching the ground. Let your child “draw” by moving the toy.

Goop/Oobleck (see #4 attached)

Talk about the different textures: thick, thin, runny and mushy. Have him/her describe how it feels in his/her fingers.

Buttons - Give your child a shirt with big buttons to button and unbutton.

Magazines - Have your child cut his/her favorite pictures from a magazine or newspaper. Discuss the pictures. Paste pictures from the magazine or newspaper that your child cut out the day before. Glue them on pieces of paper and make them into a book or put them on the refrigerator or wall to look at.

Writing - Write with pens, pencils, chalk, & markers. Make a game. First you write, and then it's his/her turn. Switch writing implements (if you used pens, change to markers or chalk.) Do it again.

Cooking - Have your child help with lunch; Make a sandwich and let them spread something on it. Have something to drink and let them pour it from a small pitcher. Let your child cut something soft like a sandwich or banana.

Cleaning - Have your child help you with washing the car, windows, and walls. Use sponges, towels, squeegees, or any other cleaning supply you have available. Let your child choose which one to use.

Ziploc bags - Give your child Ziploc plastic bags, jars and bottles to open & close. Put favorite snacks or toys in the containers if you need to entice your child to open the bag, jar or bottle.

Painting - Paint with Q-tips, straws, cotton balls.

Place a variety of painting tools on the table. Let your child dip the tool into the paint and make strokes on the paper.

Utensils - Use different cooking utensils that have holes in them. For example, a plastic spatula with slots or a plastic spoon with drainage holes, perhaps a sifter.

Sand - Put some sand in a container. Have your child pour, scoop, & find small toys buried in it. Add a little water and see how that changes things.

Food coloring - Fill a bottle with $\frac{1}{2}$ water $\frac{1}{2}$ oil. Add food coloring – Shake! Let your child do the pouring and shaking. Let them drip the food coloring into the mixture after you show them. Count how many drops of food coloring you add. Add a second color and see what color you get. For example, if you start with red and add blue, you will get purple.

Squeezing - Have your child squeeze lemons to make lemonade. Cut the lemons in half. Use a juicer or your hands. With the juicer, show the child how to turn and push the lemon to get the juice to come out. If you do not have a juicer, use one hand or both hands and squeeze. Pick the seeds out. Add some water and sugar to your own taste.

Bean bags - Make bean bags out of Ziploc bags and beans. Have your child toss them into the laundry basket. Have your child scoop the beans into the bags. Then help him/her to zip them closed. Make sure they are closed all the way. Seal with tape. Take turns tossing them into the laundry basket.

Collages - Make a collage using aluminum foil, wax paper, & brown bags. Let your child rip or cut aluminum foil, wax paper and brown bags. Let them scrunch some pieces into balls or odd shapes. Glue them onto a poster board or onto some cardboard from a box you do not need.

Indoor bowling - Play indoor bowling game with your child. Use empty plastic soda bottles for pins and rolled up socks for balls. Set the balls up close to a wall. Mark a line on the floor with tape. Your child can roll the ball from that line. Move the line forward or back to make sure your child can be successful and challenged.

Mashed potatoes - Have your child help you make mashed potatoes. You peel and boil the potatoes. Drain them and put them into a cool bowl or pot. Add milk or butter or whatever your family likes. Let your child mash with a potato masher (or a large fork) or use a hand mixer to mix.

Stone Structures - Find 5 stones (rocks). Tape or glue them together to make a structure, and then paint it. See what it looks like. Does it look like an animal? Paint a face on it.

Activities for Fine Motor Skills

1) GAK

Ingredients: 2 cups of white glue 2 containers
 2 ½ cups water 2 utensils to stir food
 coloring 1 ziplock bag
 3 tsp. borax

Directions:

Mix all the ingredients together until well blended: 1 ½ cups of water, 2 cups white glue and food coloring.

In a separate container, dissolve 3 teaspoons of Borax in 1 cup of water. Blend both mixtures together. Your child can play with it again and again. You can save it in the ziplock bag. Have fun!!

2) Fun Mixture: Magic Bubble Bags

Thousands of brightly colored bubbles float in a blend of cornstarch and water.

Yield: 1 bag

Ingredients: 5 teaspoons cornstarch ½ cup water
 ½ cup of vegetable oil 1 egg.
 Food coloring

Other things you'll need: Freezer-quality resealable bag, duct tape.

Directions:

1. Place all the ingredients in the bag. Food coloring: 2 squirts each of blue and green, or red and green.
2. Seal with duct tape.

Activities for Fine Motor Skills

3) Scented Playdough

To make this playdough you need to use a pot, a stove and the refrigerator to cool it down.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of all purpose flour
- ½ cup salt
- 1 package of unsweetened drink mix
- 1 tbsp. of vegetable oil
- 1 cup of boiling water
- Wax paper Container
with lid

Directions: Combine dry ingredients in large bowl. Stir oil and water. Stir over medium heat until mixture forms into a ball. Dump on wax paper. Allow mixture to cool slightly, and then knead until desired consistency. Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container (cut out the fruit picture from the drink mix). Your child can play with it after it cools down.

4) Goop/ Oobleck

Materials: Cornstarch

Water

Bowl

Pour cornstarch in a bowl, add a little water and have your child mix it in with his/her fingers. Add as much water as needed. Enjoy it!!