

Fine Motor Skills

What are Fine Motor skills?



Fine motor skills involve the use of the smaller muscles of the hands, commonly in activities like using pencils, scissors, construction with lego or duplo, doing up buttons and opening lunch boxes.

Fine motor skill efficiency significantly influences the quality of the task outcome as well as the speed of task performance. Efficient fine motor skills require a number of independent skills to work together to appropriately manipulate the object or perform the task.

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What skills do 'fine motor skills' include?

- Academics skills including
 - Pencil skills (scribbling, colouring, drawing, writing)
 - Scissors skills (cutting)

- Play
 - Construction skills using lego, duplo, puzzles, train tracks
 - Doll dressing and manipulation
 - IT use (e.g. mouse and stylus manipulation)
- Self care including
 - dressing - tying shoelaces, doling up sandals, zips, buttons, belts
 - eating - using cutlery, opening lunch boxes and food bags
 - hygiene - cleaning teeth, brushing hair, toileting.

Note: Visual perception (accurately using vision, 'seeing' and interpreting) is not strictly a fine motor skill but directly supports fine motor skill performance.

Why are fine motor skills important?

Fine motor skills are essential for performing everyday skills as outlined above as well as academic skills. Without the ability to complete these every day tasks, a child's self esteem can suffer, their academic performance is compromised and their play options are very limited. They are also unable to develop appropriate independence in 'life' skills (such as getting dressed and feeding themselves) which in turn has social implications not only within the family but also within peer relationships.

How can you tell if a child has fine motor skill difficulties at a glance?

- Avoidance and/or disinterest of fiddly finger skills (and has tasks listed above)
- Preferring physical activity (again to avoid sit down tasks)
- Interest in 'passive' activities such as IT (e.g. watching TV an IPAD that don't require Fine Motor skills)
- No interest in pencil or scissors skills
- Being 'bossy' in play and asking others to "draw a cat for me"
- Not persisting in the face of a challenge (e.g. asking parents to fix a problem without physically trying to fix it themselves)
- Waiting for parents to dress them or clean their teeth rather than trying themselves
- Refusal to use stylus with the IPAD

Contact us today to make an initial enquiry or book an assessment for your child
on 1800 KID SENSE (1800 543 736)

