

B10 - Occupational therapy- palm and pincer grips

The use of retained in-hand palmer grasps and the squeezing-action is based on:

- understanding that **sensory awareness** and **integration** of these senses are essential before **strength** and **coordination** in the hand will emerge efficiently
- the tactile, deep pressure and proprioceptive sensory information offered by toys are the main therapeutic consideration; the motor components that are facilitated are secondary
- the strengthening and mobility development of the hand and arm is the desired result
- the squeezes facilitate hand expansion; grip, a variety of grasps and pinches,; and stability, with flexion and extension of the hand, wrist and arm

Activities to promote pointing

- Using extended index finger to pop bubbles blown in the air
- Poking soft food, playdough or other tactile and messy play items
- Draw with index fingers in sand or shaving foam or finger painting
- Push button toys with index finger
- Point and naming eg, names of body parts
- Finger puppets - particularly good for encouraging individual finger movements
- Adorn fingers with rings, use stickers on fingers or ribbons around fingers
- Playing the keyboard, toy piano or organ

Activities to develop a pincer grasp

- Windup toys that provide resistance
- Use an eye dropper with coloured water to make pictures
- Pinch along a length of playdough with thumb and index finger
- Picking up small objects such as beads, cotton wool, coins, small sweets, raisins - show your child which fingers to use and help them achieve this
- Threading activities
- Popping bubble wrap
- Tearing paper into strips sticking activities
- Cutting activities using early years or adapted loop scissors to snip diagonally around soft card edges and create a frill
- Squeeze open clothes pegs and place in container or around the edges of cards
- Peg boards using graded sized pegs from chunky to fine

- Fuzzy felts to place and pickup the different sized pieces
- Games and simple play involving pick-up sticks, Connect-a-straws to create simple shapes, patterns or octagons requiring graded assistance to join parts
- Bending pipe cleaners to create shapes or creatures, flowers, snail spirals, etc
- Pick up small objects with tweezers, using the index finger and thumb
- Use spray bottles to water plants, hit targets or spray different colored water to make a design
- Use everyday activities such as shelling peas or other vegetable preparation that involves refined finger use and pickup

Picking up small items to tidy away involves lots of purposeful hand work.