



## **Month 6: Developing Hands and Fingers**

### **Introduction**

#### **Objectives of this month:**

1. Caregivers will learn the progression and principles of fine motor development.
2. Caregivers will learn fun and easy ways of incorporating age-appropriate fine motor activities into their environments.
3. Children will gain strength and coordination in their hands and fingers. This will improve their ability to carry out many daily activities.
4. Children will explore movement and their physical environments through fun upper extremity activities which will aid in the growth and development of the distal segments of the arm.

#### **Importance of Strong Hands and Fingers**

- Facilitates the development of fine motor skills. Strong fine motor skills are required for:
  - self-feeding
  - Dressing
  - Writing
  - Crafting
  - personal hygiene
- Almost every activity requires greater skill with hands and feet. Having good fine motor skills will help in many sports or activities in the future.
- Developing bimanual coordination and eventually discovering the dominant hand.

#### **References:**

SPARC: Sports and Recreation New Zealand (2008). Developing hands and fingers. Active Movement.

## Developmental Expectations for Developing Hands & Fingers

- 0-2 months:** When a finger is placed in baby's palm, baby closes fingers in a tight grasp  
Baby grasps rattle and holds it for 3-5 seconds
- 3-5 months:** Baby picks up a rattle and moves it  
While on her tummy, baby grasps string and pulls it to obtain toy  
Baby grasps & holds a block, when supported in a seated position
- 6-8 months:** Baby moves rattle through space  
Baby grasps block with thumb and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> fingers  
Baby bangs a cup on the table and will poke fingers in holes  
Baby grasps cheerio using a raking motion securing more than one, however progresses to grasping cheerio with thumb against side of curled index finger  
Baby crumples paper with 1 or 2 hands
- 9-11 months:** Baby claps hands and removes both socks  
Baby grasps cheerio with pincer grasp (between pad of thumb and pad of index finger)  
Baby places 3-7 blocks into a cup, and is able to bring blocks together at midline to bang them together
- 12-14 months:** Baby opens a book, stirs a spoon in a cup, turns over a bottle to dump contents out, and will put a cheerio into a small bottle  
Baby picks up 2 blocks with one hand and holds them  
Baby beginning to place large puzzle pieces into form board, or correct shape into shape sorter  
Baby starting to scribble on paper using a marker
- 15-18 months:** Child stacks 2-3 blocks and is able to place 2 large puzzle pieces into a form board.  
Child grasps marker with thumb and 1<sup>st</sup> finger toward paper, and remaining fingers are around the marker
- 19-24 months:** Child turns pages in a book one at a time, stacks 4-6 blocks, and draws (imitates) a vertical line
- 25-30 months:** Child removes screw-on lid from a bottle, stacks 8-10 blocks, strings 2-4 beads, cuts paper in one place, and draws (imitates) a horizontal line  
Child folds paper, producing a crease
- 31-36 months:** Child draws a circle  
Using blocks, child is able to imitate simple 3-4 block designs (bridge & wall)
- 37-42 months:** Child unbuttons at least 3 buttons  
Child uses a tripod grasp when drawing, and is able to draw a cross  
Child laces 3 holes  
Using scissors, child cuts paper in 2 pieces

- 43-48 months:** Child buttons & unbuttons 1 button
- 49-54 months:** Child draws a square  
Child cuts out a pre-printed circle and square using scissors  
Child is able to imitate 6-block designs – pyramid and stairs
- 55-60 months:** Child folds paper in half lengthwise with edges parallel  
Child colours between vertical lines
- 61-72 months:** Child folds paper in half twice with edges parallel

References:

Folio, M. Rhonda., Fewell, Rebecca R. (2002). Peabody motor development chart. Austin (TX): Pro-ed.