Foundational Skills for Fine Motor Development

TUMMY TIME Babies need tummy time! We have been made to believe that we should not put our babies on their tummies. We have been told not to put our babies to sleep on their tummies, but that has been interpreted to never put our babies on their tummy. Many foundational skills are developing when a child is on their tummy. It is important for trunk strength, learning to coordinate movements for transitions to sitting, crawling, and walking. It also is important for arm and hand strength, shoulder stability and hand development for grasping. I know the carriers are so convenient, but our babies benefit from being held and carried. They are in carriers and jumpers all too often. Floor time is ideal for playtime as a child is learning how to move arms and legs to get to something they want, move into sitting position, and learn how to crawl and walk. We highly recommend adding floor time to your daily routine. Get in the floor with your child and PLAY! Having children gives us a second chance at our childhood! Enjoy it!

Infancy to 2 years

Fine motor development starts with visually tracking objects. Move the toys side to side and up and down allowing your child to visually track the toys. At 2-4 months a child is learning to grasp and hold a toy. Hands should be open about 50% of the time. If your child is not able to grasp by wrapping the thumb around the toy, provide hand over hand assistance to hold and shake the toy.

Support your child in sitting to address trunk and head control. As your child becomes independent with sitting, place toys around your child to encourage them to reach and grasp the toys for playtime. Assist your child to put toys in and take them out of containers. You can ask your child for the toy, gently take it, and give it back to learn reciprocal play.

Provide books for turning pages and touching pictures. Usually around a year, a child will develop the ability to point using the index fingers. Your child may touch a picture and look at you for a response. Name the pictures or make the animal sounds to address language development.

IDEAS for Toys and activities for fine motor development:

[Store (poppiplaytime.com)](https://www.poppiplaytime.com/copy-of-store)

Birth to 1 year old

 Sensory balls, tactile books, textured rattles, and teethers.

1-2 years

 Board books, stacking toys (blocks, cups), stacking rings. Containers for your child to put items in and take out. You can use toys with openings or slots after your child learns to put items into an open container.

2-4 years

 Toys that come apart and fit back together, single piece puzzles, stringing/lacing items, and simple craft items. Activities with manipulatives to improve dexterity and also for pretend play. (toy dinosaurs or counting bears)

Coloring activities (crayons, paint, chalk, or dry erase boards) for pre-writing skills. Around three your child may be holding the crayon with fingers and thumb to color. Watch for use of one hand for a helper hand to hold the paper and the other to hold the crayon. Hand dominance is emerging.