



Occupational Therapy Intervention

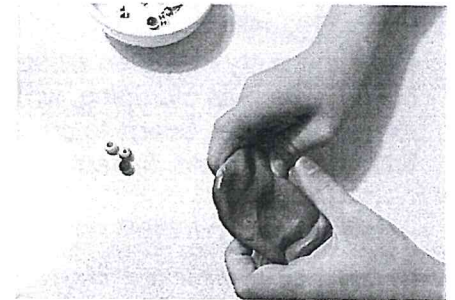
Fun Fine Motor Activities Using Putty.

Hand strength is an important area of development when you consider how many things we use our hands for in daily living. Everything from climbing, dressing ourselves, holding a pencil or brushing our teeth requires certain muscle development and endurance. In the same way that certain physical activities can build our gross motor strength so to can we build on fine motor strength. There are many actions involved in the following putty activities, all of which help to develop hand strength and fine motor skills, particularly the pincer grip (or grasp) which is needed for every day tasks such as using scissors, holding pencils and feeding.

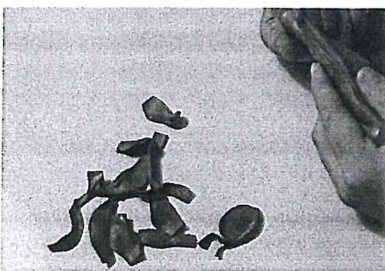
While some children will quite happily work with therapy putty others won't enjoy it as much for various reasons. If your child has low muscle tone and tires very easily of heavy fine motor work do activities together which are more play based but still work on building her hand strength and dexterity.

1. Retrieving Small Objects

Hide small objects inside the putty for your child to retrieve. Use small beads or charms which require a fair amount of work to get out of the putty. Try using a timer to see who can find all of their beads the quickest. Not only is this game fun but it also builds hand strength, co-ordination and develops fine motor skills.



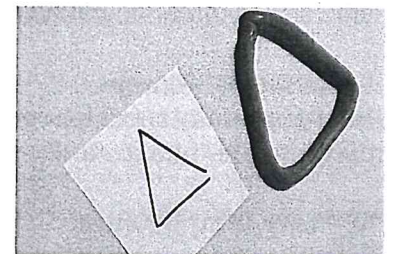
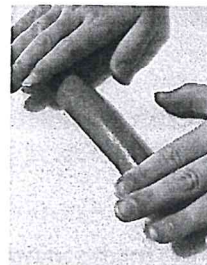
2. Making Confetti



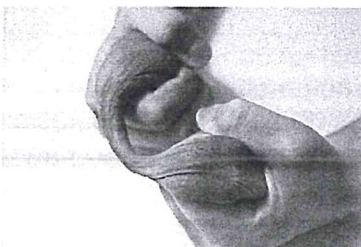
This simple activity is great for working the pincer grip and building hand strength. See how much 'confetti' you can break using the thumb and index finger. Use the last piece of putty to pick up all of the other pieces and roll them into a ball.

3. Rolling Snakes

Roll the putty into 'snakes' and then twist these into other shapes to help develop dexterity. This is an activity most children have done with play dough or plasticine before and it works just as well with therapy putty.



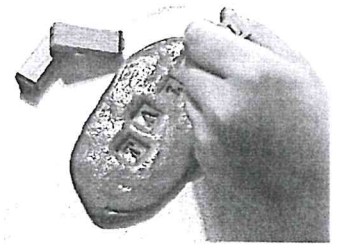
4. Squeezing – Deep Pressure Work



Squeezing and manipulating the putty can be used as a deep pressure activity or in class time to help regulate behaviour, manage stress or maintain focus as squeezing the putty provides sensory input to stay on task. If this helps your child consider keeping a small tub of putty on the desk and use it to squeeze out any tension and stay focused.



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5. Stamping

This activity involves fine motor work and also builds other skills such as literacy. Use letter stamps to practice sight words while working hand muscles and provide tactile input. While the stamping action is fun it also provides heavy resistive 'work' that helps maintain focus and provides sensory feed back.

6. Smoothing

This activity involves smoothing the putty. Try doing it in a contained surface – i.e a container lid or a plate. This action works different hand muscles to the other activities and provides a tactile experience.



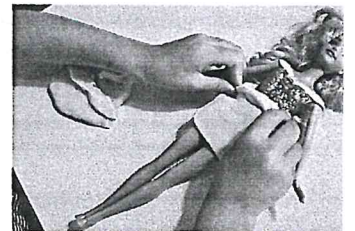
Once the putty has been smoothed out there are many activities you can build to, such as stamping, writing in the putty using a pencil or wooden skewer, or using beads to create pictures and words. These activities involve fine motor skill and dexterity and also develop the pincer grasp.



Stamping words and then smoothing them out again works many different fine motor skills.

7. Dress Ups

Try creating clothes for her dolls using putty or play dough, while this activity might seem to be just a bit of a fun game but is working hand strength in much the same way as the other activities above.



8. Imprint Barrier Game

Played in pairs, one player imprints a small household object into a smoothed out piece of putty while the other player isn't looking. The second player guesses which object made the imprint. This game can be as difficult or simple as you want.

9. Ice Mould Shapes

Push putty into chocolate or ice moulds to create shapes for use in play scenes. The action of pushing the putty into the moulds and then extracting it is a great skill building activity.

10. Putty Play Scenes

Smooth putty across a tray or bench top to use as a base for LEGO or other figurine play.

11. Cold Putty Play

Keep your putty in the fridge to add extra sensory value to play time during Summer.

12-21. Keeping It Contained

If you find your child has some days where they are happy to use putty or dough and on other days they don't like the texture. On these occasions, try putting the putty inside a ziplock bag with some small objects or sequins so they can work in this way instead. Keeping the putty contained inside a bag means they can still build fine motor skills and strength without having to handle it.