

Occupational Therapy Tip Sheet

FINGER ISOLATION



What is finger isolation?

Finger isolation is the ability to move one finger at a time.

Why practice finger isolation?

- To develop strength and motor control in individual fingers and the whole hand
- To develop the precise movements required in many fine motor tasks

How does practicing finger isolation help?

- It allows children to do more than just hold an item in their palm.
- Individually controlling the fingers allows for such things as scissor use, pencil control and fastening buttons.

A child that struggles with finger isolation may have difficulty with the following:

- Pointing or using their fingers to count
- Pencil grasp and pencil control
- Typing on the computer or other devices
- Self-care tasks such as fastening buttons, securing snaps or tying shoelaces
- Picking up small objects

Practice the following activities to develop finger isolation:

Count using fingers.



Pinch to pop bubble wrap.



Play with finger puppets.

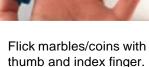
thumb and index finger.



Lay hand flat on table and lift each finger one at a time

Take turns touching each finger to thumb with eyes open

and closed.









Hide small beads in a container of uncooked rice or dried peas/beans. Ask the child to complete the following steps:

- Find beads using only thumb and baby finger.
- Find beads using only thumb and middle finger.
- Find beads using only thumb and index finger.



Sing action/counting songs like Where is Thumbkin?, Five Little Monkeys and The Ants Go Marching.





Encourage creating artwork with fingerprints: use one finger to press onto the page with the remaining fingers bent into a fist.



