

Occupational Therapy Tip Sheet

PREPARING FOR JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN



Below are practice ideas to help your child prepare for Junior Kindergarten. As your child starts to show a hand preference (dominance), complete activities with that preferred hand. It is beneficial to demonstrate and then watch as your child completes the below activities.

Pencil grasp:

- Pinch the pencil with thumb, index and middle fingers.
- Use wide/jumbo pencils for an easier grasp.
- A great way to practice the correct grasp is colouring with short (broken) crayons.







Drawing and Colouring:

- Draw and have your child then copy with simple shapes (I - O +).
- Try step-by-step drawings using simple shapes to make designs (adult draws a circle, then the child draws a circle; keep adding one step at a time to make a person, animal etc.).
- Colour inside larger areas. Wide outlines are helpful.



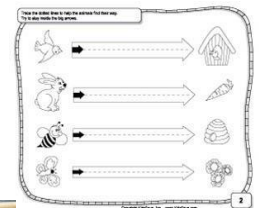
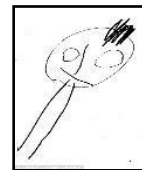
Cutting:

- Practice snipping the edge of the paper, then try cutting along short, ½ cm wide lines.
- Practice on smaller sized and thicker paper (construction paper, cardstock, paint colour cards, etc.).
- Learn how to pick up and hold the scissors; keep elbows "glued to sides" with thumbs up on the scissors and the paper. Scissors point away from the body.
- **Right-handed**  children should cut in a **counter clockwise** direction. 
- **Left-handed**  children should cut in a **clockwise** direction. 
- Once able to cut straight lines try cutting around corners and curves.



Pre-Printing:

- Connect-the-dots to form shapes, letters and numbers.
- Play sorting and matching games with colours and shapes.
- Draw a person including 2-4 details.
- Trace left to right and top to bottom pathways.
- Complete simple puzzles working toward increasing the difficulty.
- Make shapes and letters with clay, finger paints, chalk, etc.
- Imitate simple block patterns (using 3-5 blocks).



Self-Care Skills:

- Practice pulling on shoes & boots (putting them on the wrong foot is common at this age; help by placing the shoes in front of the correct foot, tracing shoes on a mat, putting a mark on the shoe, etc.).
- Practice pulling zippers up and down (may need help to start or fully undo zipper).
- Practice putting on and taking off outdoor clothing (coat, snow pants, mittens, etc.) to prepare for all seasons.