

Preschool Field Officer Service

Integrated Child, Youth and Family Services



Eye-Hand Coordination

What is eye-hand coordination?

Eye hand coordination – also referred to as hand-eye coordination – is the visual processing of information to guide hand movements. Eye hand coordination is necessary for a variety of daily, routine activities—from completing a puzzle to catching a ball to pouring a drink. A number of skills need to be working together to produce accurate eye-hand coordination:

- Ability to distinguish fine details
- Ability to focus
- Smooth eye movements
- Eye aiming
- Body awareness
- Manipulation skills

How will I know if my child has difficulty with their eye-hand coordination?

- Child may avoid many activities that involve eye-hand coordination e.g. drawing, puzzles
- Child may avoid or have difficulty with ball games
- Child may need help with many self-care skills, such as buttons or undoing a zip
- Child may have difficulty with Lego™ or other construction activities

Why is eye-hand coordination important?

- Play - young children use this skill in learning to build towers, build with Lego™ etc., and even use eye-hand coordination to tie shoelaces and do up buttons
- Sport – eye-hand coordination can help your child to catch a ball and hit a ball with a bat.
- Handwriting - visual motor integration, which is a vital skill for handwriting, develops out of a good eye-hand coordination base. The eyes need to guide the hand in forming the letters and making sure they stay within the lines.
- Reading - Eye tracking skills, which are vital for reading, can be developed through games and activities used for eye-hand coordination.

How can I help my child to improve their eye-hand coordination?

'Eye hand coordination difficulties can be treated through strengthening both the fine muscles of the hands and eyes and the neural pathways that connect visual information with hand movements. Additionally, because eye hand

coordination is often accompanied by other fine and gross motor deficits, developing eye hand coordination skills will likely also contribute to the strengthening of all motor capabilities’.

Who can help my child to improve their eye-hand coordination?

The best person to help your child is a paediatric occupational therapist. It is not necessary to get a referral from your GP; however, the GP or your Maternal and Child Health Nurse are the first point of call if you have concerns about your child’s health and development. The GP will be able to advise you on the best person to see for your child.

What does a paediatric occupational therapist do?

Paediatric occupational therapists are university-trained health professionals who help children develop the basic sensory awareness and motor skills needed for motor development, learning and healthy behavior.

Paediatric occupational therapists help children develop skills in the areas of self-care, education and play. By supporting children and enabling them to achieve their full potential, paediatric occupational therapists indirectly work on developing a child’s confidence, self-esteem, social skills and general wellbeing.

What type of activities can I do with my child to help improve his/her eye-hand coordination?

- Children’s first attempts at drawing are random scribbles. Scribbling is a way to explore various drawing tools – provide your child with paper and a variety of writing tools such as Texta’s™, crayons, pencils, paint, chalk etc.
- Drawing around stencils
- Dot to Dot drawings
- Lacing Cards
- Threading beads
- Ball games
- Tossing bean bags into a container
- Hitting a balloon with a table tennis bat
- Skittles
- Play action games – ‘Simon Says’, ‘Hokey Pokey’
- Dressing dolls
- Finger painting
- ‘Flashlight Tag’ – In a dark room, both you and your child has a torch, encourage your child to follow the beam, and ‘tag’ your light.
- Make a simple drawing or block design and encourage your child to copy it, and do one the same
- Matching blocks, shapes and pictures
- Blow some bubbles and your child can chase and pop them
- Have your child jump on a mini trampoline while catching small bean bags and tossing them at targets around the room
- Play with toys with linking pieces – toys with small pieces that fit together
- Playing a variety of musical instruments
- Water play – water pouring activities

Further Information and activity ideas:

<http://nspt4kids.com/healthtopics-and-conditions-database/eye-hand-coordination/Heading>

<http://www.otplan.com/materials/eye-hand-coordination.aspx>



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