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## **Fine Motor Milestones**

### **At about 3 years of age, your child will:**

- Use one hand more often than the other, for most activities
- Build a tower of up to 9 small blocks
- Draw straight lines (horizontal and vertical)
- Imitate you drawing a circle and cross
- Turn pages of a book, one at a time
- Snip the edges of paper with scissors (by 30 months)
- Hold crayons using the thumb and finger pinch, rather than whole hand
- Put together large linking blocks, such as Legos
- String ½ inch sized beads
- Cut across a piece of paper (by 3 years) with supervision
- Fold paper in half
- Use a fork to eat
- Manage large buttons
- Put on some items of clothing with supervision
- Assemble simple puzzles (at least 3 or 4 pieces)
- Manipulate clay, finger paints
- Screw and unscrew small jar lids, turn door handles

### **Red Flags for Fine Motor Development (3 years)**

If you notice some of the following things about your child by the time he is 3 years old, you may want to talk to your doctor, or to another health professional such as an Occupational Therapist.

- Movements seem shaky or stiff
- Arms or hands seem very weak
- Still holding a crayon with a full fist
- Not able to hold scissors and snip on paper
- Not able to draw straight lines or circles
- Can't stack up several blocks

### **At about 4 years of age, your child will:**

- Start to use one hand consistently for fine motor tasks (right-handed or left-handed)
- Cut along a straight line with scissors
- Start to cut along a curved line, like a circle
- Copy a cross (+) from an example
- Copy a square from an example
- Begin to draw diagonal lines, like in a triangle
- Start to color inside the lines of a picture
- Start to draw pictures that are recognizable
- Build things with smaller linking blocks, such as Duplo or Lego
- Put on his own clothing, but may still need help with fasteners like buttons/zippers (Should be zipping his own coat.)
- Start to spread butter or cut soft foods with a small butter knife (with supervision)
- Start to learn to print some capital letters

### **Red Flags for Fine Motor Development (4 years)**

If you notice some of the following things about your child by the time he is 3 years old, you may want to talk to your doctor, or to another health professional such as an Occupational Therapist.

- Movements seem shaky or stiff
- Arms and hands seem very weak
- Not able to cut across a piece of paper with scissors
- Can't copy a cross (+)
- Not able to draw a circle and straight lines by herself
- Can't use a fork and spoon well
- Not able to put on her own pants, loose socks and shoes

### **For more information:**

<http://www.cdc.gov>

<http://www.greatschools.org>

<http://www.babycenter.com>

<http://www.parents.com>