

Fun with Finger Play

Our hands perform intricate movements that allow us to manipulate various objects around us. Our hands provide us with opportunities to interact with and learn from the environment. Hand function is dependent on several different factors. The large upper body muscles in the trunk, shoulder, and forearms provide strength and stability to push, pull, lift and hold. It is also important to develop strength in the small muscles of the hand in order to position our hands in precise and delicate ways. Finger plays are a great way to promote improved hand skills. Some of the benefits of Finger plays include:

1. Develop arches of the hand. The arches give the hand a rounded shape and help to position the fingers for accurate use.
2. Develop finger isolation skills. The thumb, index and middle finger need to be able to be able to perform small accurate movements while the ring and small finger are tucked toward the palm. It is important to be able to move each finger individually in order to complete mature grasp patterns.
3. Develop the web space. The web space is the space between the thumb and index finger. The web space is important because you have to keep it open and rounded (like an “ok” sign) to perform precise movements such as picking up small objects from the table.

In addition to hand improved hand skills, finger skills facilitate improved ability to follow directions and improved imitation skills. Finger plays are a fun and exciting way to interact with your child while at the same time encouraging skill development.

Funny Bunny:

(Author unknown)

Here is a bunny (Raise two fingers.)

With ears so funny (wiggle raised fingers)

And here is a hole in the ground. (Make hole with fingers of other hand.)

At the first sound she hears,

She pricks up her ears (Straighten fingers.)

And pops right into the ground. (Put fingers in hole.)

Ten Fingers: I have ten fingers (hold up both hands, fingers spread)

And they all belong to me, (point to self)

I can make them do things-

Would you like to see?

I can shut them up tight (make fists)

I can open them wide (open hands)

I can put them together (place palms together)

I can make them all hide (put hands behind back)

I can make them jump high (hands over head)

I can make them jump low (touch floor)

I can fold them up quietly (fold hands in lap)

And hold them just so.

Three Balls:

Here's a ball (make ball with thumb and index finger)
And here's a ball (make ball with other thumb and index)
A great big ball, I see (put arms up and touch fingers over head)
Shall we count them?
Are you ready?
One, Two, Three (make all three balls in succession)

Open/Shut Them:

Open, shut them, (open and shut fists)
Open, shut them,
Give a little clap. (clap)
Open, shut them, (open and shut fists)
Open, shut them,
Put them in your lap. (place hands in lap)
Creep them, creep them (walk hands up body to chin)
To your chin.
Open your mouth,
But do not put them in.
Roll them, roll them, (make rolling motion with hands)
Roll them, roll them,
Roll them just like this.
Wave them, wave them, (wave)
Wave them, wave them,
Blow a little kiss! (blow a kiss)

Where is Thumbkin?:

Where is Thumbkin? (put both hands behind back)
Where is Thumbkin?
Here I am. (bring one thumb out front)
Here I am. (bring other thumb out front)
How are you today sir? (bend one thumb as if talking to the other)
Very well I thank you. (bend other thumb as if talking back)
Run away. (put first thumb behind back)
Run away. (Put other thumb behind back)
Repeat with: Pointer, Tall Man, Ring Man, Small Man.