

WHAT TO KNOW & HOW TO DEVELOP SCISSOR SKILLS


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>>> PRESCHOOL – SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- A child may present with difficulty in the use of scissors due to deficits in fine motor control, bilateral (two-handed) skills, and eye-hand coordination (the use of the eyes to guide hand movements).
- Scissor skills require: Eye-hand coordination, Bilateral coordination, Fine motor skills/strength.
- Scissor skills progress in a developmental manner. Offer cutting tasks based upon his/her current skill level along this continuum.

TRY THIS!

- ❑ Foundation Skills- Young students can practice the skills needed for scissor use. Offer fine motor tools such as clothespins, hole-punches, squirt bottles, baster, eye dropper, tweezers, and tongs to manipulate.
 - ❑ Sequence- Start with snipping → cutting on thick lines → curved lines → circle → simple shapes → complex shapes.
 - ❑ Placement- Students should hold the paper to be cut with their non-dominant hand. The scissors are held in the dominant hand.
 - ❑ Finger Placement- Modify the small loop handle with the small hole to help the student determine where their thumb belongs. Place a sticker, wiggly eyes, bright tape or other type of marking on the handle of the little loop. Example = a smiley face looking at the child. This will help to encourage correct thumb placement.
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- ❑ Visual Reminder- Place a small sticker on each of the child's thumbnails. This will help the child to keep their thumbs up.
 - ❑ Visual Reminder- Keep a poster of correct "thumbs up" scissor grasp in the classroom or on student's desk as a visual reminder.
 - ❑ Body Posture- Sit forward with both arms at middle of body. Table at elbow height. Feet flat on floor.
 - ❑ Shoulder/Elbow Posture- Place piece of paper between the child's body and their upper arm. This will keep the elbow in and the shoulder down. This also places the forearm and wrist in the proper cutting position.
 - ❑ Physical Assistance- Some students are not ready snip or cut with one hand and hold the paper with the other hand. To encourage success and maintain interest in scissor use, provide hand over hand assistance. In addition, you may also need to hold the paper to be cut.

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- ❑ Table Support- Some students are not ready to hold the paper with thumbs up". Allow him/her to use the desk to support the paper to be cut.
- ❑ Pre-Cut- Adult will trim off large pieces. Allow the child to complete the part that they will be most likely to accomplish on their own, such as straight/broad lines and gradual curves. This decreases amount of "extra" paper the child has to manipulate.
- ❑ Experiment with Scissors- Try scissors of varying sizes, handles, and blades that affect the ease of gripping, opening and closing the handles and so on.
- ❑ Left Handed Students- Use scissors designed for left handed children.
- ❑ Adaptive Scissors- Loop scissors, self opening spring scissors, Benbow scissors, Fiskars spring action scissors, and double loop training scissors.
- ❑ Texture/Paper Type- Practice cutting various paper types and objects, i.e. tissue paper, cardboard, and play dough. Stiffer construction paper, card-stock, index cards and straws are easier to cut.
- ❑ Stickers/Marks- Use progressive markings/stickers next to the line to be cut. This will provide a target as to where to place/advance their helper hand forward. Example = thumbprint cutting strips.
- ❑ Verbal Prompts- Provide cues for "thumbs up ... chomp chomp!"
- ❑ Song/Poem- "Thumb on top. Fingers below. Open and close. Away we go!"
- ❑ Create Boundaries- Highlight lines and/or the area to be cut. Some children find it difficult to determine "where" they are to cut. Some children need a broader line to encourage accuracy.
- ❑ Wiki sticks on the lines- Creates tactile cue where to cut.
- ❑ Hot glue on lines- Creates tactile cue where to cut.

