

Now you've GOT it!

Occupational Therapy Tips for Improving Scissor Skills

The EIPS Occupational Therapist was in the classroom to provide some strategies and activities related to using scissors with all of the Kindergarten students. In Kindergarten we use scissors to cut paper and other craft materials.

Here are some tips for encouraging your child's success with cutting at home:

- Provide supervision when your child is using scissors. They should be used when your child is seated carefully at a table.
- Encourage and remind your child to hold the scissors correctly with the thumb in the small handle and the pointer finger outside the larger handle for more stability. Remind "thumbs up" on both hands when cutting.



- If your child is left handed, special left handed scissors can be purchased at educational stores and some stationary supply stores that will be easier to use.
- If your child finds it difficult to open and close the scissors, practice similar movements like squeezing water with a turkey baster or using tongs to pick up blocks or other objects. Scissors with an automatic-opening spring are available at educational stores that can be beneficial.
- Thicker construction paper is easier to handle than thinner papers that bend easily.

Try to practice activities that your child is ready to be successful with. Kids usually progress as follows:

1. Learning how to hold scissors correctly and learning to open and close the scissor blades with one hand.
2. Snipping along the edge of a paper or cutting narrow paper strips into small pieces— great for glueing on a tree picture to make "leaves"!
3. Cutting across a page towards a sticker or target in the middle of the page
4. Cutting along a straight line
5. Cutting out jagged lines and curvy lines
6. Cutting out squares, triangles, rectangles, circles and ovals
7. Cutting out hearts, stars, and other more complicated shapes

- It is easier to stay on the line when it is thicker. If the line is narrow, try using a marker to outline the line to make it 1 cm thick..
- If your child rounds the corners too fast, try putting a small sticker as a target to cut to each corner.
- Remind your child to use their "helper hand" (the one not holding the scissors) to hold and move the paper. They should keep their thumb on the piece they want to keep as they cut for best control.
- Elbows should remain comfortably down by the side of the body when cutting. If your child begins to lift one or both elbows up high, remind them to turn the paper more often with their helper hand..
- It is easier to cut a smooth curve if the scissor blades are only partially closed with each cut.

**PLEASE ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER
IF YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**