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The Fine Motor Skill Intervention Basket

Introduction – what is the fine motor skill intervention basket

The Fine motor skill intervention basket is equipped with fine motor tools that will help build and strengthen a child's hand and wrists. This intervention is for children with poor fine motor skills, that find everyday tasks a challenge.

Information about me

I am a level 3 Teaching Assistant and have been at my setting for 4 years, in my setting I am currently working across the EYFS in both Nursery and Reception and, I work in the lower phase of keystage one.

What are fine motor skills



(clipart, no date)

Educators, practitioners, and researchers recognise the importance of motor skill development in the in the early curriculum (Copple and Bredekamp 2009; Kostelnik et al. 2015) However, (Hamilton et al. 2016; Liu et al.2015) agree is crucial but also state that is a neglected area. Fine motor skills refer

to the ability to move and coordinate muscles to perform various tasks, fine motor skills involve small muscle movements, such as grasping objects, buttoning clothes, or writing, these motor skills develop over time and are also influenced by genetics, environment, nutrition and physical activity. Motor skill development is a critical aspect of a child's growth, influencing their ability to explore, interact and perform everyday activities. Every child needs to develop their fine motor skills by developing this small muscle group in the hands and wrists, this muscle group enables you and I to make precise movements with our hands. Fine motor skills are not just hand movements by themselves, they also require hand and eye coordination and the use of the whole arm. (Cameron et al; 2012) investigated the role of visual motor coordination and visual spatial integration, this investigation observed children copying letters and tracing but found that children who demonstrated difficulty in both controlling fine motor movements with hands and visual forms were likely to experience difficulties in academic tasks. Fine motor delays may affect children's eye-hand coordination and visual motor integration skills in the classroom, sport and daily activity (Carlson et al. 2013)

Some movements are to reach, touch, point, place grasp and release, push and pull, shake and squeeze, tap and twist.

Why are fine motor skills important

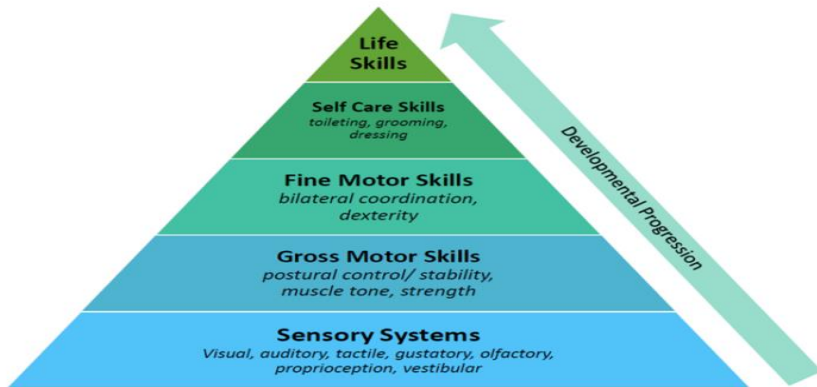
The National Association for the education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2005) have recognised that early childhood is the best time for children to acquire fundamental gross and fine motor skills, stating that this will lead to motor proficiency later in life. It also recognises and included gross and fine motor skills are an integral part of quality early childhood education standards for accreditation, because they understand the importance of these skills in children's health and education. (Stodden et al. 2014; Jones et al 2011) say that research suggests that the importance of fine and gross motor skill proficiency is one of the most important contributing factors in promoting physical activity.

The development of fine motor skills and the development of the hands are essential for everyday tasks, such as; reading, writing, drawing, using tools or simply zipping up a coat or doing up coat buttons. If a child has underdeveloped fine motor skills, they will struggle to function in their surroundings, this will have a detrimental impact on both their physical and cognitive development, having a negative impact on the refinement of problem solving and their attention. According to the (middle East Journal, 2004) “it should be emphasized that eye-hand and hand-hand coordination and fine motor skills are the means for manual expression.”

Fine motor skills also linked to social and emotional development, including that they are key to the development of the gross motor skills. If a child has poor motor skills, the child as the unique child, will have challenges that impact their development. (Cantell, Smyth & Ahonen, 1994) state, there is research to suggest that children who have developmental motor problems in their early years tend to have a degree of motor, educational and social difficulties as they get older. (Kuh et al., 2006; Murray et al., 2006) early developmental factors, such as the attainment of motor milestones in infancy, are associated with later adult physical development and cognitive performance.

Maslow (1943) hierarchy of needs, recognised the need for holistic development of a child .

If a child has poor fine motor skills the child as a whole will be affected.



(Source skill-development-pyramid, no date)

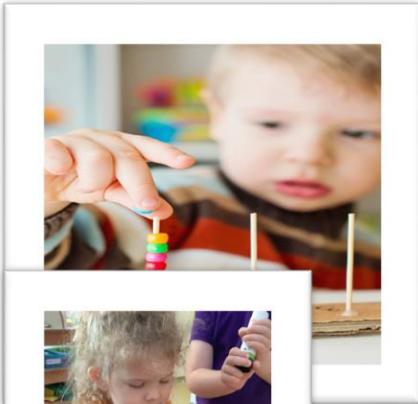
Research has shown that there is a substantial amount of

evidence that shows boys are more likely to experience significant problem in developing their motor skills than girls. (Landgren, Pettersson, Kjellman & Gillberg, 1996) and (McPhillips & Jordan-Blac, 2007) Boys in areas of disadvantage are particularly at risk of delayed motor skills.

The failure to learn fine motor skills in early childhood may have a negative impact on young children's academic performance (Dinehart et al. 2010; Gaul and Issaterel 2016; Kulp 1999)

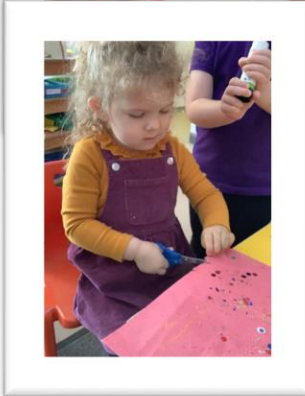
According to the Occupational Therapy of Helping children, (2018) Children can become frustrated, develop low self-esteem, anxiety, this will lead to a child falling further behind, creating a bigger learning gap that will affect their academic performance at school.

What are good fine motor skills



Good hand and eye coordination, good pinch and placing action, good steady control of hand and fingers.

(Bing Images, no date)



Good hand and wrist strength, good control of the use of the scissors, will also be able to move the paper in the direction while using scissors.

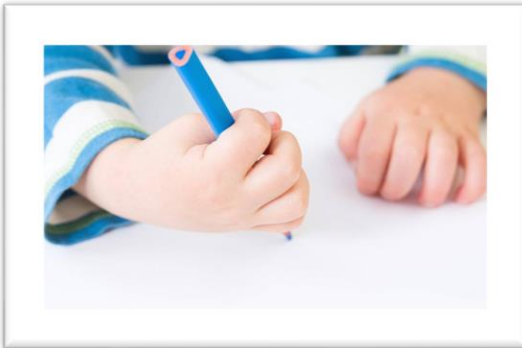
(Bing images, no date)

Strong pencil grip will be able to form correct letter formation.

(Bing Images, no date)



What are poor fine motor skills



Underdeveloped pencil grip, weak control in wrist and hand grip, not able to form any letter formation, will have very light pressure on paper.

(Bing images, no date)

Unsure of how to hold the scissors, will not be able to cut the paper. Will not have the strength to squeeze the scissors.

(Bing images, no date)



Why I developed the Fine motor intervention basket

Children that struggle with fine motor skill development, should receive more opportunities to rehearse and practice the fine motor skills that they find problematic. (Sugden & Dunford, 2007). Working across the EYFS and keystage one, I have observed that throughout each of the year groups there are children in these cohorts that are having difficulty in using their fine motor skills. They are struggling to make progress with their letter formation and are unable to form their letter formation correctly. Some children cannot write on top of the lines in their workbooks, their writing is either too big or starts to float up the page. Children lack the understanding of how to use a pair of scissors or even how to hold them in the correct way. Children are not able to open pages in a book and are not sure which way to open it as they are used to swiping an iPad. A study conducted by, Iverson, Berg, Ellertsen and Tonnessen (2005); has shown that children with motor developmental problems have difficulties in reading. After witnessing the children finding the use of their fine motor skills challenging, a coworker and I, made up the baskets, to hold interventions groups in school, recognising the importance of further intervention, it was decided that the children should have the option to take these baskets home, by having access to these activities un their home, it would also encourage parent engagement. Parent engagement

helps to create a home environment that nurtures learning, builds confidence, and strengthens the connection between home, school and the real world, parental engagement is where the true impact on a child's development takes place. Vygotsky's theory (1979), suggested that every child learns through collaboration and learning with others, before exploring Independent learning

The parents were invited to a morning workshop, The fine motor intervention basket was introduced to the parents. It was explained to the parents why the development of fine motor skills is important, what the children would be gaining from them and the need for parental engagement. The parents needed to understand that the children are not just playing, they are developing the use of their hands and wrists. By allowing the children and parents to explore the baskets it would help them to understand how to help their child develop at a faster pace. There are challenges to parent engagement, (Bayley et al, 2009) reported there are barriers to parental engagement, due to work commitments.

For the fine motor intervention basket to work successfully as an intervention I must be aware of any possible challenges, such as;

- Not securing funding
- Parents not engaging with their child, parents not asking for new resources if damaged or asking for more challenging skills to be set if their child needs to be challenged.
- The intervention baskets need to be done as a whole class and can be based on a topic the cohort are learning about, new activities must be made and swapped around to keep challenging the children.

Introducing the fine motor skill basket



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The fine Motor skill intervention basket holds various activities to develop both, the fine motor skills and hand and eye coordination, the photograph above shows the different type of activities that the basket can hold. These baskets have been put together for the use of intervention, to be used in schools and, also for the children to take home, where further intervention is needed. The activities contain in the basket are inclusive for adaptive learning,

- In this basket there are two bead trees – using hand and eye coordination the aim is for the child to thread the bead through the pipe cleaners, there are two sizes of beads, starting with a large bead then moving onto a smaller bead. The second tree the child can move on to twisting and attaching further pipe cleaners to make the branches as long as they like,
- There is a button chain – the children can build the chain up or take a part by doing up and undoing the buttons.
- The playdoh can be used for various activities such as; rolling, squashing, pinching, molding, there is also a knife and fork to use to practice cutting. There are many children of all ages in school that do not know the correct way to hold a knife and fork or are even able to

cut their food up properly, usually preferring to use a spoon, just the fork or even their hands.

- Numbered Lolly pop sticks, children can use pegs to attach to the number making sure they only attach the correct number, also using elastic band to tie on to the Lolly pop sticks, this would be challenging as they go from pinching to pinching and twisting their hand and wrist.
- Using tweezers, they can pick up the pom poms and eventually try to use the chop sticks to place the pom poms in the cup, the pom poms are various sizes.
- Using scissors, they can cut along the patterns and shapes.
- The sensory bag is filled with paint and glitter, the child can use their fingers to mix them up by making marks with their fingers on the outside of the bag, they could practice letter formation or making patterns with their fingers.
- Ribbon threading, children can thread the ribbon through the utensils, using careful hand and eye coordination.

How I promoted my product

After witnessing the children finding the use of their fine motor skills challenging, myself and a coworker, made up the baskets to enable us to hold intervention groups in school. Recognising the importance of further intervention, I spoke with and presented the evidence of progression to the class teacher and the head teacher, through observation and written record, it was decided that these children should have access to these interventions at home also, to use these activities at home would also be encouraging parental engagement.

How I have funded my product

Originally, when starting out with the fine motor skill intervention basket, I was able to use school resources to make up the activities. I would also, occasionally use own my personal finance when resources were running low, but as this was not sustainable, recourses were needed to be continually replaced and new recourses were needed for when activities were updated or made with further need to challenge fine motor skills, I was finding it pressured to keep the resources in supply. I recognised the need for the fine motor skills baskets to be continued, presenting and sharing with my evidence through observation and written notes of progression and further progression needed, I discussed with the class teacher and head teacher with showing the evidence that the need for this intervention was a must for continuation as further intervention was needed not only in school, but also for the children to take home. It was agreed that a small amount from the school budget of £30 per term could be allocated, which is a total of £180, for me to purchase these recourses when required. Also, I met with the school's PTA to ask for advice about funding this intervention, if it was to also be sent home. The PTA committee also witnessed and recognised the need for this resource, the first idea of funding we had was to hold a coffee morning, one morning a school term, where the parents could come and spend an hour making arts and crafts with their children, we raised £50 from this however this was not enough.

Also speaking to and working with the community champions at the local Asda foundation, who have helped 2,500 school projects, we were able to apply for funding. With the successful outcome of having secured funding of £500, we were able to put this fund together for a total of £730.

From desk research,

The development of the fine motor skill intervention basket is for the purpose of the development of the children, and not for business profit of financial gain; therefore, funding for my product would be under social profit. Social profit refers to the positive impact and is measured in the terms of benefits to the community, it often encompasses improvements in areas such as

education, health, environmental, sustainability, and social equity. Focusing on the positive impact for disadvantaged groups. According to the Sage Article social profit research, (2024), their social profit orientation embraces enhancement of the common good as a "reason for being," a core value that is central, not peripheral, to their work and their fiscal health (Berry 1999). To find out what possible funds were around, we applied to the newsletter and grants alerts, through the Warwick & Solihull Community and Voluntary Action, which have secured funding of 2.7 million for local projects. From this the PTA committee is able to apply to a grants officer to monitor the funding and projects. The PTA committee, when applying for grants needed to show how this recourse can benefit the school as a community. By presenting evidence of children falling behind in their learning, if this intervention is not carried out.

Available Local Grants & support for the West Midlands Regional PTA;

Active Black Country	Works with a range of local partners to inspire and enable people to lead an active lifestyle.
Arts Connect	Working to ensure all children and young people can benefit from engagement in high quality art and cultural activities.
Birmingham airport Community trust Fund	The trust is aimed at improving the quality of life for people, animals and environment.
The Birmingham Music Education Partnership	Supports and enhances music education.

Council for Voluntary Services (CVS): Birmingham council	Supporting the voluntary and community sector.
Forest School Association- Find Local Group	For advancement of education for public benefit through promotion and support of quality forest school.
Heart of England Community Foundation	Raises money to fund and develop community activity across the west midlands, schools can apply for projects.
Life Education	Health and well-being programmes 3-11 years
Millennium Point Charitable Trust	Provides STEM funding annually to not-for- profit, for schools and colleges across the local authority.
Museum in a Box	Gives opportunities to engage with museum collections.
School Library services	Meets schools needs to support curriculum.
Think Active	Healthy and active lifestyle in thriving communities.
West Midlands Fire Service	Schools, education and learning programmes.
Local service organisations	Speak to local lions club or Rotary club
National retailer's local branches	National retailers can assist local schools.
Supermarket community Champions	Contact Asda There are also other retailers

The National Lottery Community Fund	Rewards grants
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Further future funding

For the long-term funding, I have been investigating about, applying for the Tesco Stronger Starts grant, (this grant has donated over £5 million worth of grants to schools) to further advance fine motor skills to eventually bring in intervention that we can combine with food/ cooking/gardening and growing food to enable wider opportunity to use and develop fine motor skills, this intervention , will incorporate gross motor skills also, linking to further social and emotional development for all children. `The (Department for Education, 2022) supports the idea of children using food as an intervention as it further develops hand and eye coordination and fine motor skills. The fine motor baskets could provide different resources for different topics, this would benefit the children greatly as to combine their motor skills with learning life skills they will benefit greatly from. As a school we can still promote indoor and outdoor resources and equipment when applying for this grant, so that we can offer a wide range of fine motor skill development to give the best possible start to their development in having the chance of more opportunity, in doing this we can offer so much more variety, to create more ideas and the fine motor skill intervention basket can evolve continuously to meet all needs. With this scheme we can present the evidence of how important and invaluable the development of fine motor skills are for children. If we are chosen, then friends and families of the school can vote by placing the blue counters with us as a chosen school for the project.

The are also other possible ideas for funding that the school PTA can investigate through easyfundraising.org.uk, through this scheme the PTA can

register the school with them, and through this the PTA can nominate a retailer that take part in this scheme such as, eBay, Argos, John Lewis and other retailers on the list. The PTA can inform parents on the school newsletter, that they can donate a percentage of their payment every time they shop with a particular retailer, once they have also registered on the same site. For example, if Argos was the nominated retailer, then up to 5.00% can be donated to the school towards the intervention baskets, this scheme has raised over 2 million for community funding. This programme is in the table above, one of the grants that the PTA can apply to.

Having funding that can regularly come in through the PTA and small grants, will enable us to provide fine motor skill baskets that can provide fine motor skill interventions for all areas of learning.

Thank you, for taking the time to look at my business plan, I hope that you have found my product interesting and recognise the benefit it provides and see the value that it provides, to keep it available for future cohorts and for continued development. I look forward to working with you to help, find further ways keep this product funded and to keep the intervention it provides in schools.

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