

Learning to Control Your Pencil

Providing your child opportunities to use pencils & crayons develops pencil control skills, using two hands together to hold the page, and develops the muscles in their fingers, wrists, arms and shoulders. Here are some fun ways your child can develop these skills at home:

- ❑ Color in small areas. Concentrate on staying within the lines.
- ❑ Circle small letters and numbers such as in Word Find puzzles.
- ❑ Work with a very short pencil or crayon, which encourages movement and control from the fingers
- ❑ Do mazes and dot-to-dots. Remind your child to go slow and touch each dot or stay in the lines.
- ❑ Stabilize the forearm flat on the table so that the movement originates from the fingers rather than the wrist, arm or shoulder.
- ❑ Talk about how to move the pencil in a controlled way. Use a good car driver analogy; “drive your pencil carefully – stay on the road, stop at the stop line”.
- ❑ Encourage students to be “the boss” of their pencil – tell it where to start and stop.
- ❑ Talk about where the pencil starts and stops e.g. “start at the top line, crash into the writing line, don’t go through it!”
- ❑ If your child is using their electronic device to draw or do any of these activities, could they use a short stylus to play the game instead of their finger? A stylus is like a pencil but with a soft end which doesn’t scratch.

