

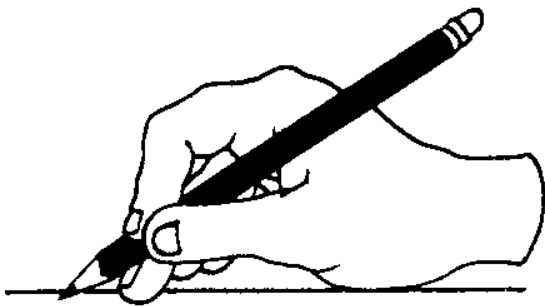


Your Future in MIND

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Occupational Therapy Tips for Holding Pencils, Crayons, and Markers

Throughout the Kindergarten year students will spend more and more time holding and using pencils, crayons, and markers. Students are encouraged to develop a “tripod” grasp with their thumb, index, and middle fingers pinching the tip. The wrist is slightly bent back and the pencil leans on the area of the hand between the thumb and index fingers.



As students transition to grade one and beyond, a tripod pencil grasp provides the best position for control and endurance as writing and drawing demands increase. Children who are able to hold the pencil in this position should be reminded and encouraged to do so as much as possible. Some children may also use their fourth/ring finger to hold the pencil; this is also suitable and they should progress to the tripod position as the Kindergarten school year progresses.

Other students may need additional support and strategies to work towards this position. This can include:

- Lots of opportunity to play with toys and activities that encourage development of hand and finger strength.
- Using an easel or slant board to develop the best wrist and arm position.
- Using a pencil grip on their pencil; several are available to try and the teacher and Occupational Therapist can work with students to find the best fit.
- Using stories and reminders of how to hold pencils (e.g. “shark hold”).
- Using thicker or triangular shaped crayons, markers, and pencil crayons.
- Using a stylus for students who are motivated with the iPad or tablet activities.
- Lots of encouragement!

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