



# Hand Strengthening Supply List

## *Materials for Weight Bearing and Other Movement Activities*

- Towel or blanket for propping during tummy time
- Collapsible fabric tunnel
- Balls, cars, toys, stuffed animals to retrieve during crawling play
- Foam therapy wedge
- Pillows/cushions for crawling obstacle course
- Bean bags
- Therapy ball
- Large cardboard blocks
- Puzzle

## *Materials for Pushing/Pulling/Lifting*

- Lego® or Duplo® Bricks
- Lego Pattern Cards
- Velcro®
- Rubber bands
- Tape or stickers
- Rolling pins
- Paper for tearing and crumpling
- Weighted toys, weighted stuffed animals, or weighted balls
- Box or laundry basket
- Pop beads
- Small manipulative (marbles, coins, popsicle sticks)
- Empty containers with hole/slit cut in the top

With just a few simple materials and supplies, it's easy to get kids motivated to participate in hand strengthening activities! Throw a few of these items in your bag or keep them on hand in the classroom for instant hand strengthening fun!

## *Materials for Squeezing and Pinching*

- Play Dough and putty
- Eye droppers
- Bubble wrap
- Sponges
- Spray bottles
- Water guns
- Squeeze bottles
- Stress balls
- Balloons and fillers for DIY stress balls
- Clothespins and clips
- Hole punches
- Scissors
- Tongs and tweezers



# Hand Strengthening Through Everyday Play

There are lots of easy ways to strengthen the hands through simple everyday play! Think about all the great play activities kids are already doing to target those hand muscles and make them strong. Try working these activities into kids' everyday play routines!

**Climbing** - Encourage climbing on ropes, ladders, trees, jungle gyms, playground equipment, and more!

**Cooking** - Kneading dough, stirring batter, scooping, cutting...if it happens in the kitchen, it's probably a hand strengthener! Opening and closing containers, squeezing juice from a lemon/orange, peeling an orange are all great options too.

**Wind up toys** - Kids love these simple cause and effect toys and those fingers will be working hard to get the toys wound up and moving!

**Gardening** - Working and playing in the garden offers many opportunities for building strength in the hands. Have kids dig in the dirt with their hands or a shovel, pull weeds, lift and pour a watering can, and spraying plants with a spray bottle!

**Beach/sand play** - A day at the beach is another fun way to strengthen the hands. Kids can dig in the sand with their hands or shovels, build sand castles, and carry buckets of water or sand.

**Chores** - Simply helping around the house allows kids to use their hands and fingers in many different ways, which can help build strength. Try throwing laundry down the chute or into the washing machine/dryer, washing the car, washing floors/tables/windows/dishes, shoveling snow, raking leaves, taking out the garbage.

**Playground play** - Grasping the chains on a swing, hanging from the monkey bars, or holding onto the grips of a rock wall are all great hand strengtheners!

**Office play** - Kids love playing with "grown up" materials. Squeezing a stapler (with supervision), folding paper, using paperclips are fun hand strengthening activities. squeezing staplers, folding paper, paperclips

## Lacing, sewing, and threading activities

**Bath toys** - Squishy toys that squirt water can make bath time even more fun while also providing resistance that builds strength in the hands!



# The Best Hand Strengthening Toys for Kids

These fun toys are perfect for getting kids interested in hand strengthening play! They're perfect props for the classroom, amazing tools for therapy sessions, and awesome entertainers for home!

**Rimobul Assorted Designs Dough Extruders Set** - Pull out the play dough and put little hands to work pushing out snakes of all different shapes from hearts to circles with this extruder set of 10 fabulous colors!

**Butterfly Bubble Fine Motor Squeeze Strength Bundle** - This bundle of 6 activities is specifically targeted to build fine motor skills through strengthening. Comprised of activities and toys that are resistive, yet fun, your child will squeeze and push those tiny hand muscles into shape!

**Therapy Putty** - Putty is a go-to for hand strengthening in the therapy world, but it is fun, easy to find and maintains its consistency over time. Not to mention the colors are so pretty!

**Pull and Stretch Bounce Balls** - Bouncy balls are fun by themselves but this awesome set of 3 colorful balls, stretches and pulls to allow kids to build their hand strength in addition to their hand-eye coordination!

**Squigz** - From heavy work to fine motor skills to visual motor skills and more, the possibilities for these "fun little suckers" are endless! The Squigz Starter Set comes with 24 little silicone suction cup poppers in 8 different shapes and sizes.

**Safety Plastic Tweezers** - Develop the strength needed for a great pincer grasp by having a child pick up objects from a sensory bin, sort craft pom poms, or pick up small blocks and stack them using a pair of tweezers!

**Wind Up Toys** - Wind up toys are as entertaining to adults as they are to kids and it takes some strong fingers to turn that tiny dial to achieve the fast moving fun!

**Wooden Lacing Cards** - Practice letters and build hand strength and fine motor skills at the same time with lacing cards! This value-packed Melissa and Doug learning set has a shaped lacing board for every letter of the alphabet.

**Bath Toys** - The bathtub is a great place for strengthening little hands. Fill up an old shampoo bottle and let your child squeeze it empty. Or try a set of fun water squeeze toys to encourage imaginative play as they squirt away!

**Stickers** - Place colorful stickers all over your carpeted floor and let your toddler go to town pulling them up. This is an awesome fine motor task that will encourage grasping and fine motor strengthening! And, who isn't motivated by stickers?!?!

**Pop Beads** - Kids love to pop together necklaces, bracelets and rings. The B. Pop-Arty Jewelry Fashion Kit features 500 unique shapes and designs, including 12 rings and 6 bracelets, that are fun to create and wear.

**Animal Poppers** - As strong hands squeeze this pig's belly, it launches soft, ping pong sized balls shooting across the room! The harder he is squeezed, the bigger the launch!