



## Promoting Eye-Hand Coordination

Many of the activities that young children love, like riding a bike, playing hopscotch, jumping rope, or catching a ball, require good coordination. **Coordination**<sup>1</sup> is the ability to observe or see the surrounding area, predict what will happen, time movements, and react to the situation. Coordination means moving the arms and legs at the same time (for example, both hands working together to push a rolling pin) or in alternating movements (for example, moving hand-over-hand to climb a ladder). **Eye-Hand Coordination** is the ability for the eyes to guide the hands in movement. Promote your child's overall coordination skills and eye-hand coordination with these activities:

### YOUR INFANT (birth to 2 years old):

- Give your infant time to explore a play mat, activity gym, or crib mobile. Hanging toys and activities develop her eye tracking and hand motions.
- Put Cheerios™ on the high chair tray for your table-food eating child. Show him how to pick up the Cheerios™ using his thumb and forefinger.
- Read 'lift-the-flap' board books with your child, such as Where's Spot? by Eric Hill or Where is Baby's Belly Button? by Karen Katz. Let her open each flap and turn the pages.

### YOUR TODDLER (2-3 year olds):

- Practice throwing & catching with your child. Start with soft balls that are easy for young children to grasp. Keep your child's interest by varying the activity. For example, buckets or sacks make good things to catch with, while beanbags, Frisbees, or balloons are fun things to throw.<sup>2</sup>
- Bounce a playground ball with your child; see how many times you can bounce it back and forth.
- Play Kickball Bowling. Set up several plastic bottles (2 liter soda bottles or milk jugs) to serve as bowling pins. Have your child kick a ball to try and knock down the bottles. Make the game more difficult by filling the bottles with water or moving the bottles farther away from your child.
- Have your child stack blocks; see how tall he can make the tower of blocks.
- Make cookies. Have your child use the rolling pin to roll out the dough.
- Let your child practice pouring water from a pitcher into a small cup.

### YOUR PRESCHOOLER (4 year olds):

- Play Swat Ball. Place a tennis ball inside an old sock; attach the sock to a clothesline or tree limb with a long string. Have your child try to swat the ball with his hand; as coordination improves, try hitting the ball with a racket.
- Draw different types of lines (straight, curved, shapes, squiggles) on pieces of paper. Ask your child to cut the paper along each line using children's scissors.
- Keep pencils and paper (blank paper or paper with numbers, letters or shapes written on it) in a place where your child can easily access it. Have her write or trace the objects on the paper.
- Offer simple "Dot-to-Dot" activities.
- Make a necklace. Give your child a piece of yarn with a knot at one end, and ask him to string dried pasta (use different types of pasta with center holes). Help your child tie the ends of the string together to form a necklace. For an edible version, use Cheerios™ and licorice!

### Book Suggestions

Toes, Ears & Nose by Marion Dane Bauer • Do Like Kayla by Angela Johnson

<sup>1</sup> "How Can You Improve Your Child's Coordination Skills?" OT Mom Learning Activities <<http://www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/coordination-skills.html>>.

<sup>2</sup> "Movement Games for Kids." Living Strong <[www.livestrong.com/article/207828-movement-games-for-kids/#ixzz1vnK7Lk1Y](http://www.livestrong.com/article/207828-movement-games-for-kids/#ixzz1vnK7Lk1Y)>