



### **Cutting Promotes:**

1. Eye hand coordination
2. Development of fine motor skills. Promotes controlled coordination of the first and second fingers and thumb.
3. Control of the hand with some wrist and forearm involvement.

### **Activities Preceding Cutting:**

1. Clip clothespins which demand pinch mechanism of fingers to thumb.
2. Clay; used in experimental play involving pinch, squeeze, and pound mechanisms.
3. Pick up and release small objects with thumb and fingers.
4. Hand or finger puppets used to stimulate finger manipulation. Example: Hand puppets - wave, clap puppet hands, hold puppets head in its hands, etc.; all encourage increased open and close movements of the fingers, as well as additional variations of hand and wrist movements.

### **Suggested Development Sequence of cutting:**

1. Cut clay or dough (a resistive media): non-directive (can be held in any manner); promotes *cutting* motion of one hand and *holding* motion of the other.
2. Paper snips - bits of paper cut at random: Develops fine pincer motion, with short, quick movements at random
  - a. Snip corners of folded paper - open for doilie.
  - b. Use snips of entire pieces of paper for leaves of trees, snips can be pasted on an outline of spring, summer, or fall trees.
  - c. Snips used for filling in shapes or to fill in picture.
  - d. Large snips used to make random designs.
  - e. White snips - snow or winter picture; or tree decoration on green Christmas tree or green wreath, pasted on paper.
3. Cut along folded edges of paper - this introduces the beginning of a continuous movements before reaching the end as opposed to the above snip method.

- a. Japanese lanterns - fold the paper in half lengthwise. Draw a straight line the length of the longer edge and have the child cut up that line and stop - withdraw scissors and begin a new strip up to the line. A physical guide may be set up initially before drawn lines are introduced.
  - b. How you can do the second part of the paper mats. Fold the paper in half at the width. Again draw a guide line and cut up to the line and stop. Then weave in long straight strips cut previously.
  - c. Eventually withdraw the drawn line and just cut up to an approximate distance from the papers edge and stop.
4. Cut Straight Lines:
  - a. Use physical guide not involving pre-drawn lines such as a pre-cut card-board or heavy paper comparable in size to half of  $\frac{3}{4}$  the size of the paper to be cut. Place this guide under the paper being cut and begin cutting along the edge of the guide. Or, cut a straight line between two pieces of cardboard and place a sheet of paper over this and cut.
  - b. Extra thick drawn lines - if lines are drawn, use heavy, dark crayon or felt tip marker or colored lines.
  - c. If child advances to making own lines, use ruler for guide and then cut along the line.
5. Strip cut - Promote cutting straight lines without emphasized guides.
  - a. Cut long strips for chains and then past strips into circles and make long continuous chains or, use strips to wrap around tin cans to be sued as pencil holders.
  - b. Cut long strips of paper to use for weaving paper mats.
6. Gentle Curves: Promotes continuous motion of cutting, but begins to involve the *holding hand*.
  - a. Using a pre-cut half arc in heavier paper, cover with another sheet of lighter paper and cut this with scissor guiding between the pre-cut line of the underlying cardboard. (Same method but with two cardboards in cutting straight line #4a.) Or, use the shape of a half arc cut out of cardboard and placed under or on top of the sheet of paper.
  - b. Draw with heavy lines a gentle curve - only involve one curve - and watch to see that holding hand turns paper as arc is cut.
7. Stop, start and turn: A child must learn complete control of his scissors before advancing to a more difficult cut, which demands stopping, turning the paper to a new direction and resuming the cutting motion without racing right off the paper.
  - a. Combine line cutting and circles: cut shapes out separately and on another sheet of paper paste these shape parts into a whole making an object or subject. This is optional since it requires imagination and pasting skill of the child.
  - b. To cut out complex forms the child enjoys; such things as animals, houses, flowers, etc., found in coloring books or story books, before the child is ready; draw a geometric form and have the child cut the geometric form. Or, if the figure

the child wishes to cut is too difficult for him/her, draw a geometric form around that figure on the page. Tear the page from the book and allow the child to cut around the *geometric form*, thus in a modified way, allowing him/her to cut out his/her desired figure.

8. Cutting out combinations of straight lines, squares, triangles, rhomboids, and circles. These shapes in various combinations are cut out together - jointed at some area. Additional clues such as cardboard guides, heavy lines or color may still be used initially.

Gradually increase complexity of design until the child is prepared to begin trying simple, irregular forms.

9. Perhaps one more step might be added - that which involves cutting the inside of shapes out. This is most complex thus coming at a much later stage of development, as it demands control of scissors so that the part of remain is not torn or all crumpled and bent. It also demands different positioning of the cutting hand - a downward thrust before initiating the familiar cutting motion.
  - a. Physical guides may be used - a piece of cardboard placed under the paper with a slit already cut, so that the scissor will not go all the way through the paper on top of the cardboard when the child makes the initial downward thrust.
  - b. Start with large shapes - prefold (crease) the spot where the scissor is to enter, or lightly fold a section and snip with the scissor to get the cut started.
  - c. Use a physical guide underlying the area not to be cut so that as the child is cutting, he/she does not become so absorbed as to cut over that inside line into the intended uncut area.
  - d. Begin with very simple shapes that have large center areas to be cut out and gradually decrease these areas as the child shows advancement.

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