

# Growing Together

## ABA Strategies for Family Services Series



Anderson  
Early Learning  
Academy



**Supporting Fine Motor  
Development Through OT & ABA**

# What is Occupational Therapy (OT)?

- OT helps children develop the skills needed for daily activities, including play, self-care, and school tasks.
- In preschool, OT often focuses on fine motor skills—small movements using hands and fingers.
- ABA principles can be used to teach and reinforce these skills through structured practice and positive reinforcement.

## Key Areas of Fine Motor Development in Preschoolers

### Hand Strength & Dexterity

- Squeezing, pinching, and grasping objects.
- Using tools like scissors, crayons, and utensils.

### Bilateral Coordination

- Using both hands together (e.g., holding paper while cutting).
- Activities like stringing beads or opening containers.

### Visual-Motor Integration

- Coordinating eyes and hands to complete tasks.
- Includes tracing, copying shapes, and puzzles.

### Self-Help Skills

- Dressing (buttons, zippers), feeding (spoon, fork), and hygiene (brushing teeth).

## ABA Strategies that Support Fine Motor Skills

### Task Analysis

- Breaking down complex tasks into smaller, teachable steps.
- Example: Teaching shoe tying step-by-step with prompts and reinforcement.

### Prompting and Fading

- Providing physical assistance, modeling, or verbal help, then gradually reducing it.
- Builds independence and confidence.

### Reinforcement

- Using praise, tokens, or preferred items to motivate practice.
- Reinforcement helps make learning fun and consistent.

### Repetition and Consistency

- Practicing skills regularly in short, focused sessions.
- Builds muscle memory and confidence.



## How Parents Can Support Language at Home

### During Daily Routines

- Encourage dressing independently: zippers, snaps, buttons.
- Let your child help with meal prep: stirring, pouring, peeling.
- Practice opening containers, snack bags, and lunchboxes.

### During Playtime

- Use playdough for squeezing, rolling, and shaping.
- Build with blocks, Legos, or magnetic tiles.
- Try lacing cards, stringing beads, or pegboards.

### During Reading Time

- Offer crayons, markers, and scissors for drawing and cutting.
- Encourage tracing shapes, letters, or simple pictures.
- Use stickers for peeling and placing with precision.

### During Quiet Time

- Do puzzles together to build visual-motor skills.
- Practice simple mazes or dot-to-dot activities.
- Read books and point to pictures, encouraging finger isolation.

## Tips for Success



- Keep activities short and fun.
- Use clear, simple instructions.
- Celebrate effort, not just results.
- Offer choices to increase engagement.
- Communicate with your child's AELA team for personalized strategies.



# Anderson Early Learning Academy

*Anderson Early Learning Academy (AELA) is a NYS approved 4410 program that provides children ages 3-5 years of age opportunities to learn in an environment that is developmentally appropriate and teaches the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten*

**Anderson Early Learning Academy**  
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