



Finger isolation

What is it?

Finger isolation is the ability to move each finger one at a time. Infants move all fingers in unison, as they develop, they learn to move fingers individually. Children typically develop finger isolation between the ages of 9 months and 15 months of age.

How you can help:

- **Demonstrate** to your child how to isolate fingers and encourage your child to use fingers individually or in pairs during play
- **Offer** your child plenty of everyday opportunities to handle small objects (if safe and appropriate) to practice using their index finger to point and isolate fingers for play e.g. play finger soccer, use keypad gadgets see activities below

Activities and games that can help with finger isolation:

- Push button toys – guide hand to press with index finger. Use a press button telephone or an activity centre with buttons. Guide your child's hand to poke their finger down on the buttons.
- Poking fingers into playdough.
- Books with holes for fingers are also fun, e.g., the hungry caterpillar
- Playing finger games /singing action songs – 'Two little dickie birds', 'Round and round the garden', 'incy wincy spider', Tommy Thumb
- Incorporating pressing light switches into routine e.g. switching light off when going to bed.
- Small hollow cylinders are great to put on index fingers, encouraging the child to take them off and put them back on again, e.g. Smartie tubes. You can also put Hula Hoops on individual fingers.
- Finger puppets – made out of paper or old fingers cut off gloves.
- Use tweezers/children's chopsticks to pick up things and eye droppers to paint
- Making finger trails in sand or on steamy windows - shaving foam on a tin tray.
- Finger painting
- Peel stamps and stickers
- Water play with spray bottle and water squirters
- Popping bubbles