

Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy

Bimanual (Two Handed) Activities

Using one hand to perform a task whilst the other assists is needed for many activities. To support your child to develop using their dominant hand and helper hand together try some of the activities below. If you have difficulties using one hand this is your Helper hand.

Playdough



- You may need to support your child to stretch out their arms towards the play dough on the table.
- Press down on the playdough with 2 hands
- Ask your child to grasp and hold the rolled-up playdough in their helping hand and break it apart using their dominant hand.

Stick Together Toys- Fruit and Vegetables



- Encourage your child to hold one side of the fruit in their helping hand and keep it steady while they pull it apart / put it back together using their dominant hand.
- You can also encourage your child to hold one side of the fruit and cut it apart along the Velcro join using a toy knife.

Building Blocks/Stacking Toys



- Stack building blocks with alternating hands one at a time then knock them over and watch them crash!

- Stacking cones/cups with alternating hand
- You can use your helper hand to steady the cones/blocks whilst you stack them

Making Music



- Hold instruments such as rattles or maracas in each hand, encourage moving the hands up, down and to the side. Use music and singing.
- Use whatever items you have to make drums! Upturned pots and pans with wooden spoons.
- If your child has difficulty holding instruments in their helping hand support them to do so.

Arts and Crafts



- Tearing paper; Encourage your child to hold the paper with their dominant hand and pull it apart with their helper hand. If your child is able to they can make a collage with all the pieces!
- When colouring or painting make sure they secure the paper with their helper hand
- Finger painting and hand printing

Bubbles



- Encourage your child to reach towards the bubbles with both hands and squash it with a big “clap”! bringing both hands together

Daily Routines

Everyday activities are great opportunities to use two hands together!

Washing Hands



- Encourage your child to place both hands in the basin during hand washing.
- Support your child to wash their dominant hand and helper hand

Bath Time



- In the bath encourage your child to reach for toys with both hands- toys which are slightly bigger than one hand are preferable. Try balls, large cups for pouring or big sponges for squeezing!

Dressing



- Encourage your child to use both hands when dressing- lifting their hands above their head or helping pull up their trousers

Eating



- Encourage your child to hold the spoon or support them with your hand over their dominant hand
- Encourage your child to place their helper hand on the tray or table. Prompt them to hold the bowl steady with their helper hand.

This link (<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/hemiplegiaresearch-fungames/>) from Newcastle University which was designed to help children with hemiplegia, is also full of really helpful ideas for games to encourage use of 1 hand and 2 hands together.

If you have any queries please contact the team on Clcht.referrals.cypot@nhs.net or telephone 02072668606

Working in partnership with you: supporting children and young people to participate in what they need and want to do.