



## FINE MOTOR



## PENCIL GRASP

### Functional Pencil Grasps:

A traditional tripod grasp is not necessarily required for legible and productive printing and handwriting. Instead alternative grasps, such as those shown below, can also be functional.



**Tripod Grasp**



**4 Finger Grasp (Quad)**



**Thumb Wrap (Tripod)**



**Thumb Wrap (Quad)**



**Thumb Tuck Grasp**

### Non-functional Pencil Grasps:

However, for students with handwriting difficulties, who have poor speed and legibility, a fisted or a 5-fingertip grasp is not ideal.



**Fisted Grasp**



**5 Finger Grasp**

In these instances, try the ideas on the next page.

## Getting Ready to Print:

**Pencil Size:** Use a shorter pencil for easier grasp and better control.

**Pencil Grasp:** Encourage use of a *functional pencil grasp* such as:

- **Tripod grasp:** Grasp pencil with thumb, index and middle fingers, “pinching” it securely. Tuck 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> fingers into palm. Ensure pencil shaft is resting against web space. The web space is the soft area between the base of the thumb and index finger. Please see previous page.
- **Alternative grasps:** Please see previous page.

Consistent, daily use of the same functional grasp is recommended.

A *pencil grip* can be used as needed to encourage consistency of grasp and decrease hand fatigue.

**Positioning:** The height of the chair and writing surface can affect a student’s efficiency and attention. Feet need to be supported with hips and knees at 90°. This may require use of a lower chair or foot stool.

The height of the desk top should be 1-2 inches above the height of the elbow when sitting.

The “heel” of the student’s hand should be resting on the desk top or *slant board*. This is the “steady” part of the hand. The “dynamic” or moving side of the hand is now ready to print!



This resource has been developed by a team of occupational therapists at Sunny Hill Health Centre. The information included in this handout is based on current research and expert clinical opinion. Please contact your student’s occupational therapist if you have any questions or concerns.

## References:

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