



Hand and Finger Strengthening Ideas: Playdoh

Squeezing, kneading and pulling playdoh or theraputty are useful to improve grip and finger strength. Theraputty are a stronger version of playdoh which comes in varying grades of resistance (e.g. medium or soft).

Playdoh or Theraputty activities:



- *Mould playdoh into pretend animals.*
- *Make playdoh letters.*
- *Create pretend food with playdoh (e.g. pizza, spaghetti and meatballs).*
- *Hidden treasure.* Use small items such as beads as 'treasure' and hide them into playdoh or theraputty. Encourage your child to use his/her fingers (index, middle and thumb) to find or hide the 'treasures'.
- *Cut playdoh sausages with scissors.*

Playdoh or Theraputty exercises*:



- **Make a mountain:** Shape dough into a cone and stick it on a flat surface. Place fingers and thumb over the top of the cone. Lightly pull up the cone with fingers and thumb together to make a tall mountain.
- **Squeeze:** Place dough in the palm of hand. Curl up fingers to make a fist and squeeze the dough as hard as possible.
- **Make a snake:** Roll playdoh into snakes or sausages.
- **Finger scissors:** Roll up a ball of dough. Place the dough between two fingers. Squeeze two fingers together. Try to keep the fingers as straight as possible.
- **Thumb and finger hide and seek:** Shape the dough or putty into a large ball. Grasp it with your thumb pointing up, bend it, press it deeply into the dough/putty and pull it out. Repeat with the other remaining fingers.
- **Squash bugs:** Roll up a small piece of dough or putty. Squeeze it between each finger and the thumb.

**Images obtained from Developmental Occupational Therapy Western Australia (Handout: Playdoh Activities for Hand strength).*

