

## SCRIBBLING/COLOURING SKILLS

### Occupational Therapy

#### Scribbling

Practice scribbling and making little crayon strokes onto paper, while imitating an adult and then on their own.

Practice coloring using vertical/horizontal and circular lines/scribbles.

Encourage the child to use their other hand as their helper hand to hold the paper. Ensure a functional grasp is maintained on the colouring utensil.

#### Colouring Tips

- Try having beginners fill in simple stencils with as much colour as possible.
- Provide large, simple pictures at first with thick line boundaries. Lines should be dark to promote a good visual boundary. Highlighters or thick markers can also be used to outline shape areas with appropriate colours. Encourage the child to outline the picture before colouring it in.
- If the child has difficulty colouring within line boundaries, you may want to outline the design with coloured glue (“Elmer’s” coloured glue), glue gun, Wikki Stix or use a stencil. Be sure to put your glue border on the exterior edge of the border. You can also use verbal prompts such as “little wiggles” or “baby strokes”, and encouraging them to slow down when getting close to the boundary.
- You may want to encourage the child to colour over various textures (e.g. sand paper, corrugated paper, leaves) to provide good feedback or use pastels or crayons.
- Encourage the child to colour in a uniform direction by providing verbal cues to colour “up and down” or by imitating strokes.
- Encourage the child to colour in the entire area. Verbal cues such as “colour in all the white spots” is helpful.

- Reinforce spatial orientation and shapes of the picture, i.e. “colour inside the lines”, “those are straight lines”.
- You may want to use a variety of colours or scented markers to motivate the child to colour.
- When the child becomes more proficient with colouring, progress to colouring pictures with smaller shape areas and more details. In addition, you may want to progress to regular width line boundaries.
- Use a high contrast (black) background to encourage colouring in the shape/design.
- Use modeling and turn taking to encourage colouring. You can also show them a model of the final product.
- Use partially coloured pictures, either by making your own or purchasing partially coloured pictures.
- Use a slanted surface (2-3” binder, slant board) to increase attention, if they are easily distracted.
- To help engage children, sing songs to encourage them.
- Encourage the child to try to keep the page in one place when they are colouring.
- Use more than one colour – do not be concerned with what colours they choose – let them be imaginative. As the child gets older, help them identify appropriate colours for each section or use colour by number style colouring pages.
- If your child becomes bored easily with colouring (this may be a sign that they find this task difficult), take turns colouring different parts of the picture!
- For difficulties with applying enough pressure, use gel crayons, paint crayons, markers.