BUILDING Little Hands to Build Brains

**Little hands need to be strong** to hold writing tools and form letters clearly. Here’s how to build that strength while turning everyday moments into Brain Building moments, too!

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**Build writing muscles with a “workout.”**
- Squeeze balls of play dough.
- Count how many “reps” you both can do.

**Snap! Crumple! Pop!**
**Make some noise while you build muscles.**
- Little hands love to snap green beans or shell peas.
- Tear and crumple different kinds of paper.
- Pop the bubble wrap that comes in a package.
- Talk about all the different sounds you’ve made and how noisy your hands can be.

**Have cutting edge fun.**
Cutting paper, play dough, foam, fabric or other materials (with child-sized safety scissors) strengthens hand muscles and develops hand-eye coordination.
- Start by practicing opening and closing the scissors.
- Ask how it feels to cut a piece of paper.
- Does it feel different from cutting play dough or foam?

**Follow a scissor trail!**
Draw straight lines, swirly paths or zig-zaggy trails and cut along them with scissors. Build up to more complicated trails or patterns or thicker papers such as grocery bags or cereal boxes.

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