

# Emerge



## A Child's Place

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Occupational Therapy  
Speech Therapy

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Serving children from birth  
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conditions such as:

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Disorders  
Handwriting Impairments  
Fine & Gross Motor Delays

A Private, Independent  
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## Advantages of Addressing Fine Motor Skills in Early Childhood



Bonnie Hacker, OT  
Founder / Director

While many cases of fine motor skills disorders go unaddressed for life, diagnosis most commonly occurs between the ages of six and 12. Diagnosis of problems with fine motor skills rarely occurs before the age of 5.<sup>1</sup> However, challenges with fine motor skills become evident in the pre-school years. In the school setting, these problems can result in emotional distress and self-esteem challenges. Parents need not wait until school begins to address delays in fine motor skills.

Children with fine motor skills deficiencies often demonstrate poor handwriting and poor performance with crafts. For this reason, teachers have been known to label children as lazy or apathetic. Experts have discovered that children with delayed handwriting skills also demonstrate reduced composition skills such as using simple grammar and less fluid sentences.<sup>3,4</sup> Children develop the mindset that they cannot write, and this perception challenges their self-esteem.<sup>4</sup> Delay in self-care tasks such as buttoning a shirt, tying shoe laces, or tidy use of eating utensils can cause friction at home. Research has associated coordination problems with poor socialization, academic problems, emotional problems, and expression of deviant behaviors. **In many of these cases, challenges persist into adolescence and adulthood.**<sup>5-7</sup>



Timely development of fine motor skills should be addressed in early childhood. However, therapy can help children of almost any age. Watch for these fine motor skill milestones:

### Age 1 to 2:

- Scribbles
- Can turn pages 2 or 3 at a time
- Feeds self with spoon

### Age 3:

- Copies simple shapes, such as a cross or circle
- Holds pencil with thumb and forefinger, rather than fist (50%)<sup>8</sup>
- Cuts with scissors

### Age 4:

- Copies a square
- Cuts out simple shapes
- Uses eating utensils skillfully
- Mature pencil grip

### Age 5:

- Hand preference is established
- Draws a variety of recognizable pictures
- Can copy a triangle
- Writes his or her name
- Colors within lines

Early intervention establishes a foundation for school success. Occupational therapists at Emerge have expertise in assessment of fine motor skills and in highly effective training techniques that children enjoy. Tools such as Roll-A-Dough® letters and the Stamp and See Screen® turn essential learning into highly effective, multi-sensory play. Expert pediatric occupational therapy can serve to improve targeted motor skills, educate parents, teach coping techniques, and address issues of self-esteem.

**Please tell parents about Emerge – A Child's Place  
Believing in a Child's Potential to Flourish**



### Affordable Care at Emerge – A Child's Place

Many parents find that insurance coverage for pediatric occupational or speech therapy is often limited. In these cases, Emerge has even more to offer in addition to uncompromising quality of care and excellent facilities. The rates at Emerge are designed with the knowledge that many families pay for these services from private funds. Even though the quality of care at Emerge is at the highest levels, you will find the fees at Emerge to be the most affordable.

## References

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