More ideas to try

- Play "Feed the tennis ball." Make a slit in a tennis ball (the mouth) and decorate with ears and a nose. Encourage your child to feed the tennis ball, by squeezing the ball to open and popping dried pasta into its mouth.
- Provide opportunities for your child to play with sponges, wash items e. g. bikes and wring the water out of the sponge.
- Using a bulb syringe e. g. ear syringe or eye dropper, have a race by squeezing them to blow a cotton wool ball or table tennis ball across a finish line.

A Parent's Guide to Physical Development

How to help your child to develop early writing skills

In order to be able to write, children need to develop wrist, hand and finger strength to hold and control a pencil

Developing hand strength

Many skills are required to develop an efficient pencil grasp. These include the ability to move fingers in isolation of each other, adequate hand muscle strength, & good wrist stability.

- Encourage your child to pop bubble wrap using the whole hand and individual fingers.
- Use dough to "work out" fingers and the whole hand. Encourage your child to squeeze, poke with individual fingers and thumbs, roll and pat the dough with the whole hand.
- Place dough in rubber/latex glove, encouraging your child to manipulate and squeeze the gloves.

- Add shaving foam and food colouring to a zip lock bag, encouraging your child to make marks and patterns by using the flat of the hand and individual fingers.
- Encourage your child to pour water using a small jug, plastic bottles and watering cans.

- Play finger football using a ping pong ball. Encourage your child to use individual fingers to shoot at the goal
- Provide two handed activities e. g. unscrewing lids from bottles/jars, wringing water out of doll's clothes or holding a mixing bowl and stirring the contents.