**Strategy: Efficient Movement and Endurance**

Using the tape dispenser is a task that 4 and 5 years olds are capable of but often are not given the opportunity to do. I also wanted to encourage some language and cooperation in the activity so I had the kids build paper sculptures. I gave them some instruction on how to accordion fold and to use the tape dispenser and showed them some examples of ideas that other children had done in different classes. Then we broke them into small groups of about four with two tape dispensers per group. The idea was to share supplies and receive help from a classmate to tape something together. The children developed amazing ideas with their projects and created group names.

These projects used two hands together, hand dexterity as well as functional tasks like folding paper and taping. It also promoted conversation and cooperation. It was one of those activities that the kids who are the most reluctant to participate in fine motor activities were the most likely to stick with the task the longest.

Erika Rudyk
Occupational Therapist

My activity for the month in January was Make Your Own Snowman. I brought out materials like modelling clay, feathers, stickers, string, cutting materials, etc. that I knew I could use to target fine motor skills, as well as encourage creativity. I chose a snowman because I wanted to give the students a starting point to work with. One of the boys in the class who can be reluctant to participate, decided to take part in the activity but he wanted to make a robot instead. I was so pleased to see him take ownership of his project and explain it with the speech and language skills that he had. He even asked for more materials to decorate his robot. I had never seen him show initiative in this way and his teacher was impressed. The children offered him support, encouragement and were excellent peer models. In turn, some students liked his idea of a robot and changed their project as well. That inspired different robots, then animals and eventually winter animals instead of just a snowman, based on the individual interests of the children.

Jana Phung
Occupational Therapist

If you would like to purchase a copy of the *Universal Designs for Learning in the Early Learning Context* book, please contact Genesis at 780-6386810 or genesisearlylearning@ecsd.net