

# Importance of Stretching: Upper Extremity

Stretching your child's affected arm and hand may not seem like you are doing a lot, but in actuality you are promoting valuable use of that side. By establishing a daily routine, your child will become familiarize with their arm being moved in various ways. Try using a reward system or allowing your child to watch a favorite show or movie if your child seems reluctant to participate in their stretching exercises.

## Tips to Stretching:

- ✧ **Go slowly-** Be gentle with moving your child's arm and hand to prevent injury
- ✧ **Right Amount-** Stretching should never be painful, so ease up slightly if your child reports pain during stretching
- ✧ **Hold Stretch-** Holding the position for 10-15 seconds will ensure the quality of the stretch
- ✧ **Child Involvement-** Include your child in their stretching routine by asking what comes next, or allow your child to perform a self stretch on themselves

## Benefits of Stretching:

- \* **Increases Blood Flow** throughout the Arm & Hand
- \* **Improves Range of Motion of the Joints**
- \* **Decreases Hypertonicity**
- \* **Promotes Use of the Affected Side in activities**
- \* **Increases Sensory Awareness (touch, proprioception)**
- \* **Prevents Contractures of the hand, wrist, or elbow**