What is colouring?
- Using finger control to fill in colour within set boundaries of a picture.

Why is colouring important?
- It helps develop finger control needed for printing.
- Colouring within lines teaches children how to work in a limited space, which will also help with printing.

**Strategies to help a child develop colouring skills:**
- Teach the child the correct way to hold and move a crayon or pencil:
    → The thumb and index finger pinch the crayon and direct its movement. The middle finger helps either at the bottom or pinching with the thumb and index finger.
    → There should be a rounded open space between the thumb and index finger. The length of the crayon rests in this space.
    → Sometimes different grasps can also provide good crayon control.

- If the child is struggling to hold the crayon, it may be necessary to further develop their hand strength and coordination:
    → Practice strengthening activities, including: squeezing a spray bottle, pinching clothespins, beading string and playing with playdough.

- Offer a variety of colouring tools, such as thick and thin crayons, markers, coloured pencils, paint brushes, sidewalk chalk, etc.

- Provide images that have thicker borders and decrease the border thickness as the child's skills improve.

- Trace and thicken the edges of a picture to increase a child's awareness of the boundary.
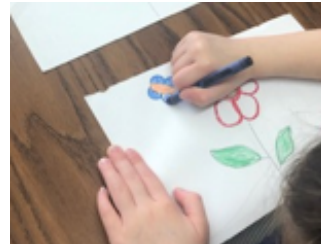
- Trace the boundary of the image with glue or wikki stix to provide the child with a physical cue to increase their awareness of the edge.

- Encourage the child to colour in a circular motion, moving just their fingers and not their whole hand and/or arm.

- Regular practice will help a child improve finger strength, control and colouring skills.