

Making Getting dressed Fun



Making Getting dressed fun

Getting dressed is often challenging for both the child and adult. Buttons and zippers are often tedious for little fingers and occasionally lead to tears.

It is helpful to know that getting dressed fosters moments for learning and meaningful interactions with young children. Getting dressed presents the opportunity for young children to further develop skills to be independent and empowered learners.

Before you start

You may like to explore your child's unique sensory preferences, where they are developmentally, and what support may be required to empower children towards moments for learning. For example:

- It may be helpful for some children to begin learning to remove clothing before attempting to get dressed. Once children develop the skills required to remove clothing, they feel more confident putting clothes on, even if they are not always successful.
- It may be helpful for children to sit whilst getting dressed so that they feel more supported.
- Does your child have a favourite shirt, and will this be a useful tool in supporting their engagement?
- Consider the texture of clothing and how this may feel against a child's skin. For children with sensory preferences, would it be helpful to remove tags?

- For children who are still developing self-care skills required to get dressed, think about the level of skill required, for example, providing clothing that is easy to put on and remove, (minimal buttons or zippers) or consider using larger-sized clothing which is easier to put on and remove.
- Help children begin to understand the front and back of clothing by exploring labels and tags, (pictures can also be used to help children understand the front from back, for example, is their favourite animal on the front of their shirt).
- Support children to remove a shirt from the opposite side, pulling their arm through, and pull off their shirt, as shown to the right, (as opposed to lifting over their head). This will help to minimise your child getting stuck.
- Practice, practice, practice.
- Consider practicing skills when you have time and are not rushing out the door.



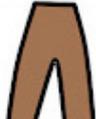
Preparing to get dressed

- Think about your family's schedule and plan ahead. If you have an early start, pull out your child's clothes the night before. Laying clothes out in the order in which they will be placed on. For example, undergarments before pants or shirts before jumper.
- For some children, visual supports may further assist with the understanding of the steps in daily routines.

Allowing children to be involved in decision-making empowers children to be active and involved learners and it motivates children towards opportunities to learn new skills. You may like to support your children to select clothing to wear, which is appropriate for the season.

Consider the dressing environment, for example, would your child benefit from having the heater on? When showering, would it be helpful to have the clothes accessible and nearby?

Young children must be supervised when accessing the bathroom environment.

Getting Dressed	
1	 Pants
2	 Socks
3	 T-Shirt
4	 Trousers
5	 Jumper

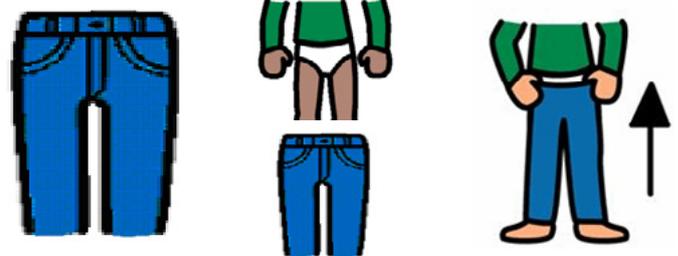
Getting dressed.

It may be helpful to break the routine down into smaller steps. Working on one step at a time before moving to the next goal can further support children in being set up for success. For example, you may like to support your child by placing their legs into the pants, and then they can try to pull their pants up independently.

The smaller steps required to put on pants include:

1. Place pants in front of body.
2. Hold pants at the waistband.
3. Raise one leg and place into pants, (it may be helpful for some children to have support to assist with balancing whilst standing on one leg).
4. Pull up pants.

Visual example:



It is important that all attempts are acknowledged and celebrated to empower and motivate children to be active participants in learning.

Opportunities for learning.

Getting down on your child's level is a great tool to further support the development of positive relationships and fosters moments for learning. You may like to consider modeling getting dressed with your child. This may include you putting a jumper on or off to show them how.



Activities to support the development of skills required for the getting dressed routine

- Practice placing a lei or a necklace over the head (*please ensure that children are always supervised when engaging in this experience. This activity is recommended for children 3 years and above*).
- Cut rings from an old shirt or piece of material, tie it together and practice placing legs through.
- Practice placing anklets around your ankle to work towards putting on socks.
- Incorporate zippers into play experiences, for example, practice opening and closing Ziplock bags.
- Attach pipe cleaners to shoes to support the development of skills required to tie laces. Helpful tip: Position your body behind the child to provide hand-over-hand support.
- Using an outline of feet to support young children to begin to learn left from right.

Opportunities for learning include:

- The development of fine motor skills as children begin to learn how to use buttons and zippers.
- The development of gross motor skills as children learn to balance, standing on one leg to put on pants.
- The development of cognitive skills as children begin to identify various parts of the body, for example, arms and legs, or remember which item of clothing goes on first.

Further Resources:

- Ask your Start Strong Pathways Educator to help with this. They can help with making visuals or supporting this routine.
- Does your child have an Occupational Therapist? Let them know you are working on the getting dressed routine with your child. Check in with them about some further strategies or other resources.
- Does your child have a Speech Pathologist? They can help you with visuals as well as other resources to engage your child during this routine.

Reference

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OYMGS_2yGk

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNjqaJfkjrA

raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/health-daily-care/dressing/how-to-get-dressed

www.mother.ly/child/10-expert-tips-to-help-your-kids-get-dressed-by-themselves

