Children’s Therapy Services

Patient Information

**Learning to get dressed**

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| **General advice** | Give your child enough time to dress and undress.  Practice in the weekends and evenings.  This will be more relaxed then when you are in a hurry to go to school. |
|  | Use a reward chart to motivate your child |
| Dressing a sensory sensitive child | Ask your child to look at what they are doing. |

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|  | Talk to your child when dressing.   * Explain what to do step by step. * Show your child what to do. * Use hand over hand techniques. * Use pictures. |
|  | Step by step:  Break each dressing task down into many small achievable steps. |
|  | Do each step the same way every time.   * This way your child knows what is going to happen.   and   * Your child knows what they need to do. |

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| **Sitting comfortably:** | Make sure that your child is comfortable.  Your child needs good support in sitting to help with balance.  Use a small chair so that your child can have their feet on the floor.  or  Get your child to sit on the floor with support behind them. |
| **Looking:** | Try dressing in front of a mirror.  It helps if your child can see what they are doing. |
| **Easy clothes:** | Try easy clothes first.  Examples   * Loose fitting clothes * Clothes without difficult fastenings |

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| **Backwards chaining:** | You start the task and your child finishes.  Example:  -You put a sock over the toes and ankle  -Your child finishes by pulling the sock up.  -This way your child gets the pleasure of completing the task |
| **Orientation:** | Show your child that there is affront and a back to clothes.  You can show that there is a picture or pattern at the front.  or  A label at the back.  You can sew a coloured label in clothes to show what is the back. |

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| **Easy fastenings:** | Choose shoes with Velcro closures.  Add Velcro to button backs.  Add a key-ring or ribbon to zips. |
| **Organising clothes:** | Organise clothing the night before.  Lay the clothing out in the right order.  Ask your child to help putting their clothes away. This way they know  where it belongs. |

**Contact details:**

Children’s Occupational Therapy

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