

Occupational Therapy Children and Young People

Dressing Workbook



Tips for teaching dressing skills

In General:

- Undressing is an easier skill to learn than dressing.
- Loose fitting clothing is easier to manage than tight fitting clothing. Try tighter fitting clothing once your child is confident putting on loose fitting clothing.
- Try to be consistent with the dressing task. For example, encourage your child to start with the same side of the body each time.
- Try to work on dressing at the same time each day, during your child's daily routine.
- If you are rushed during weekdays start dressing practice at weekends
- Leave extra time so your child does not feel rushed. Try to minimize distractions and interruptions.
- Demonstrate- your child is likely to be a visual learner.
- Try to work on dressing in the same location initially.
- Try using pictures to demonstrate the task. For example a picture of a sock (e.g Boardmaker, photograph or PECS) Keep words to a minimum and give the child time to process instructions
- Replace thread on buttons with elastic thread
- Remember to end each session with a success and praise your child's efforts.

With Trousers:

- Try practicing with shorts first
- If trousers/shorts have a button, snap or fastener, fasten them for your child

With shirt/jacket:

- Begin with a short sleeve shirt which is easier for your child to manage
- If your child is struggling, talk your Occupational Therapist about other ways to put on shirts and jackets.

With shoes:

- It is easier to start out with slip-on or velcro shoes to eliminate the need for your child to manage shoe laces.
- If shoes have laces, teach your child to loosen the laces and pull the tongue back before putting them on- Professor shoelace has child friendly tutorials on Youtube for shoe lace tying

Backward Chaining

Here the adult begins the task, with the child only doing the last step. Gradually the adult does less as the child is able to do more of the task themselves. This way the child always gets the reward of finishing the task e.g. the adult puts the T-shirt over the child's head and helps them to get their arms through the holes. The child then pulls down the t-shirt at the front.

An Example of Backward Chaining:**Taking off a shirt:**

- Step 1; Let the child remove the last half of their arm from the sleeve
- Step 2; Let the child remove their whole arm from the sleeve
- Step 3; Let the child remove shirt with one arm in and one arm half in
- Step 4; Let the child remove shirt when pulled off shoulders
- Step 5; Let the child remove the shirt

Taking off a T-shirt:

- Step 1; Let the child remove the T-shirt from their head
- Step 2; Let the child remove T-shirt from their neck
- Step 3; Let the child remove T-shirt with one arm in and one arm out
- Step 4; Let the child remove the T-shirt with one arm in and one arm half out
- Step 5; Let the child remove the T-shirt with both arms in and T-shirt pulled up to shoulders
- Step 6; Let the child remove the T-shirt

Levels of Assistance

- On the next page are definitions for the Levels of Assistance you will provide your child while using backward chaining.
- The first level is the maximum amount of help (A. Helping Only), which is where you will want to begin backward chaining. You will move down through the levels until you reach the minimum amount of help (E. Talking only). By following these levels of assistance, you are

providing your child with the right amount of support they will need in order to be successful.

- The amount of time you spend at each level will depend on your child. Many things can affect your child's performance and as a result their performance in the dressing task. You will need to monitor how they are doing, and do less for them when you feel they are ready. Following are some tips on how you will know when to decrease the amount of help you provide.

Tips for Adjusting Your Level of Assistance

- As your child becomes more familiar with the step of a task, gradually reduce your assistance.
- Let your child take more and more responsibility for performing the task alone.
- If your child can perform the step and you are helping by talking only, your child is ready for the next step.
- If you still need to help or show your child the step, he/she is probably not quite ready for the next step.

Definitions of Levels of Assistance

1. Helping only

This is doing the step with your child, hand over hand. For example, you help your child to pull up the trousers by holding your child's hands and pulling up the pants to his/her waist.

2. Talking & Helping

This is telling your child what to do and doing the step with your child. For example, you told your child to pull the trousers up to the waist and you helped to pull the trousers up. Helping may involve holding your child's hands and moving your child through the motions.

3. Talking & Showing

This is telling your child what to do and demonstrating what you would like him/her to do alone. For example, you told your child to pull up the trousers to his/her waist and you showed how you pull up your own trousers.

4. Talking & Pointing

This is telling your child what to do and pointing to something that shows him/her what you are talking about. For example, you told your child to pull up the trousers to the waist and you pointed to his/her waist.

5. Talking Only

This is telling your child clearly and simply what to do. For example, you told your child to pull his/her trousers up to the waist.

Backward Chaining Progress Chart
Letter Level of Assistance

- A- Helping Only
- B- Talking and helping
- C -Talking and showing
- D- Talking and pointing
- E- Talking only

Pick the level of assistance used and put in the AM and then again for the PM for each week.

| <u>WEEK</u> | <u>AM</u> | <u>PM</u> | | <u>AM</u> | <u>PM</u> |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Week 1 | | | Week 5 | | |
| Week 2 | | | Week 6 | | |
| Week 3 | | | Week 7 | | |
| Week 4 | | | Week 8 | | |