

NAIL CUTTING

Some children have difficulty tolerating having their nails cut which can make this necessary task upsetting and stressful for parent and child.

Here are some suggestions for you to try with your child:



Different Tools

Try different tools for example if your child cannot tolerate nail scissors, try using nail clippers or a nail file. You may need to experiment with a few different things before finding what is most comfortable for your child. Some children take a little while to adapt to new sensations so try to use a new tool 4 or 5 times before trying the next thing. Curved nail scissors, baby nail clippers, nail files (cardboard or glass) are all worth trying.

Ensure your tools are sharp so that they cut through the nail on the first attempt.



Visual Supports

Using visual supports for nail cutting can help many children. Use a picture to represent the nail cutting with a picture to represent a preferred activity such as snack or TV. Explain to your child that **first** he will have his nails cut, **then** he can have his snack.



Visual Supports



Soft Nails

Try straight after a bath when your child's nails are a bit softer.

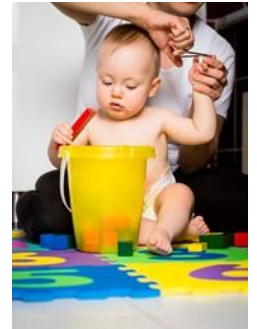
Time

Try small bursts where you cut one or two nails at a time.



Distraction

Use distraction: If your child becomes absorbed while watching a favourite programme, trim her nails while she is watching. Singing songs together, playing with a toy or listening to music may also help.



Child Asleep

Many families wait until their child is asleep to cut their nails.

Give Control

Sometimes children are more tolerant of sensations when they are in control of them. Encourage older child to become independent in cutting or filing their own nails, even young children can be taught to use a nail file.

Talking

Try talking to your child about what it is they don't like about nail cutting: it may be how you are holding their fingers, fears of being hurt or not liking the feeling of having short nails afterwards. Understanding your child's concerns can help you negotiate a solution.