

SELF CARE DRESSING MYSELF

PUTTING ON AND TAKING OFF A JACKET

By one year your child should be able to help you as you dress them by pushing their arms and legs through items of clothing. By 2 years they should be able to remove an unfastened jacket.

By 2 ½ years they can put on easy clothing such as a jacket or open front shirts without zipping/buttoning.

By the age of 3 they should be able to assist with zipping and unzipping and separating the zip at the bottom of a jacket.

Between the ages of 3-4 your child should be able to put their hands through both armholes and down the sleeves in front opening clothing (e.g. jacket). They should also be able to take the same item off completely.

By 4 years old children should be able to get their clothes on and off independently but will not be able to manage fastenings (e.g. zips and buttons) for another year or two.



HINTS AND TIPS

- It is much easier for your child to learn how to undress before dressing. Therefore practice taking off their jacket first.
- Start with a jacket that is a bit too big, loose-fitting clothing is easier to manage than tight fitting clothing. Let them practice putting on your jacket
- Children learn in different ways so you might need to vary your approach. There are a number of ways in which you can help:
 - Physically assist your child
 - Show your child
 - Tell your child

You can use each of these ways individually or any combination depending on what suits your child. Please be aware that some children cannot look and listen at the same time so limit the amount of information you giving.

- A good way to teach your child how to get dressed is to break down each task into small steps and teach him the last step first. This technique is called backward chaining (for more information visit www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/life-skills/self-care/dressing-myself/backward-chaining/). Once they can do the last step of the task, teach them the second-last step, then the third-last step and so on.



- If your child is struggling it can be tempting to take over – don't! Give your child time to work it out for themselves and give loads of encouragement. If necessary, talk them through what to do and only intervene if they get really stuck. It is often better to practice these things when you are not in a rush so weekend mornings are better than when you are rushing out to nursery/school/work.
- Your child needs opportunities to practice putting their arms into sleeves. This can sometimes be easier when using larger items of clothing so let them practice on your jacket.
- Instead of automatically correcting a mistake (e.g. twisted collar or hood) why not encourage your child to look in the mirror and get them to identify the problem. You may need to ask them some questions to focus their attention.
- There are a number of methods that can be used to put on a jacket. Try all methods to see which way your child has more success with. Once you have identified the method that suits your child share this with others (e.g. nursery/primary school staff, grandparents, child minder etc) so that everyone uses the same method.



There are different ways of putting on your jacket, visit www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/life-skills/self-care/dressing-myself/ for some video ideas on teaching your child to put on their jacket.

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Make a game of this by taking an adult size shirt/jacket, seal the cuffs with elastic bands and then hide small toys down each sleeve. Ask your child to put their arm in and pull out the toy.
- Play dress up with your child; use a variety of oversized clothes.

