

“Any child who is self-sufficient, who can tie his shoes, dress or undress himself, reflects in his joy and sense of achievement the image of human dignity, which is derived from a sense of independence.” Maria Montessori

Therakids

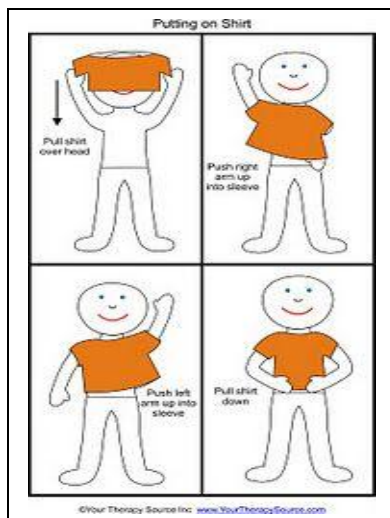
ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EDUCATORS AND PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CLASSROOM WELLNESS.

Dressing Skills

One of a child's greatest accomplishments is when they master the skill of dressing themselves independently! Not only do they get a sense of independence, it will make your morning routine run smoother and faster. Independent dressing is a skill that requires a lot of practice and patience. Here are some tips to help teach this new skill:

Tips for teaching dressing skills:

- Patience, patience, patience! Dressing/undressing is a hard skill to master and has NUMEROUS components. Allow extra time and plenty of opportunities to practice this new skill
- Children typically learn to undress first. Let them help at night before bath time or bedtime
- Many children will benefit from a quick lesson on how to put their clothes on. Explain where the tag belongs, which hole your legs go in/arms go in, etc
- Give verbal cues when needed. Keep your wording and directions short and consistent. Gradually reduce the amount of assistance being given (both physical assistance and verbal cues) as the child becomes more independent with the task
- Backward chaining. This is a style of teaching where you provide assistance throughout the steps until the child can complete the last step independently. Example: putting on a shirt – you help with putting arms in holes, head through the hole, and the child pulls down the shirt independently. Once the child masters the last step, advance to them completely the last 2 steps independently, etc until they have mastered the entire skill
- Start with something easy - elastic waist pants, shorts, or shirts without buttons. Leave the zippers, snaps, and buttons for another day!
- Lay clothes out in the proper order and right side out



Tips for home

- Play dress up. Who doesn't love to pretend to be a princess or doctor, and practice dress/undressing at the same time!
- Practice taking slippers off and on. This provides the same movement and some resistance as taking off shoes.
- Let your child have a choice in what they wear. You may have some mismatched days, but they are dressing themselves independently!
- Some children are sensitive to certain fabrics, tags, or seams. Be mindful of these things when dressing. Socks can be worn inside out if a seam is bothersome. There are also many companies who now make sensory friendly clothing,

Sources: TherapySource

Therakids P.C. provides specialized occupational, physical and speech therapy services to help children overcome developmental concerns. Services are provided in the school setting throughout southwestern Illinois by licensed occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and speech-language pathologists. **Website: www.therakids.org**

