

# DRESSING

## HOW TO PROMOTE:

Dressing can be promoted in many ways and is very dependent on the child's abilities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

The best way to promote dressing is to practice often, allow for autonomous decisions when able and make adaptations when needed (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

## DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE:

According to the CDC, Dressing Milestones begin at 18 months. The child aids in dressing by pushing limbs through clothing (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

30 months: Takes loose clothing or jacket off independently. 3 years old: Puts loose clothing or jacket on independently.

4 years old: Unbuttons some buttons independently.

5 years old: Buttons some buttons independently.

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022)

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## COMMON ADAPTATIONS:

- Zipper Pulls
- Elastic instead of buttons
- Looser fitting clothing
- Slip-on shoes

(Shepherd & Ivey, 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). CDC's developmental milestones [PDF]. [https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/LTSAE-Checklist\\_COMPLIANT\\_30MCorrection\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/LTSAE-Checklist_COMPLIANT_30MCorrection_508.pdf)

Shepherd, J., & Ivey, C. (2020). Assessment and treatment of activities of daily living, sleep, rest, and sexuality. In J. C. O'Brien & H. Kuhaneck (Eds.), *Case-Smith's Occupational Therapy for Children and Adolescents* (8th ed., pp. 295). Elsevier.

# DRESSING: INTERVENTION IDEAS

1

Practice dressing through dress-up activities or having a child dress a toy doll. This can help them learn the correct configuration and sequence of dressing.

2

Use cards or other visuals and allow the child to practice laying out the sequence of dressing before attempting the actual task (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership, n.d.).

3

Allow the child to attempt dressing tasks in different positions that might allow them to be more comfortable or offer more stability. Ensure the child has enough support to safely work on the task (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership, n.d.).

4

**FORWARD CHAINING**  
Have the child complete the first step of the sequence, then complete the rest for them. Allow them to complete more on their own as they gain skills (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership, n.d.).

5 **BACKWARD CHAINING**

Complete the first steps of the activity for the child and let them complete the last step. As they gain skills, allow them to complete more steps on their own (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership, n.d.).

6

Use button boards, lacing boards, cloth buttons, or zipper boards to help with learning different fasteners (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership, n.d.).