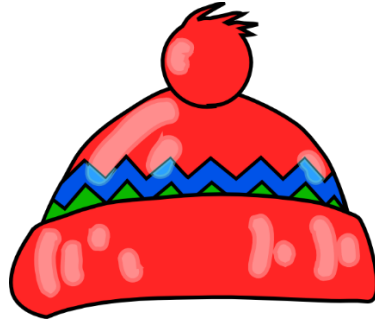




It's no surprise that dressing your child yourself seems like the easiest and quickest option.

But your child needs to learn how to do it. The ability to dress yourself builds confidence, independence and a sense of achievement – and once your child has it mastered, it's one less thing for you to do in the morning! See below for some tips and tricks to help with dressing.



When teaching dressing:

- 1) Focus on teaching undressing first; it is easier than dressing
- 2) Loose fitting clothes are easier than tight fitting ones with buttons, snaps and zippers
- 3) Pajamas are often stretchy and loose fitting. It can be helpful to start dressing practice with the pajama pants.
- 4) Leave extra time so the event is not stressful or devote more practice time on weekends.
- 5) Be consistent if there is a time of day that works best to practice dressing (eg. bedtime for pajamas instead of the morning)
- 6) When learning to put on pants – try shorts first
- 7) When learning to put on shirts – try short sleeves first
- 8) Have your child sit on a chair or on the floor to dress, rather than stand up
- 9) **For coats: Try the overhead flip:** Place the open coat or sweater faceup on the floor in front of your child. The neck or hood should be nearest to his body. Have him kneel down, put his arms through the sleeves, and then stand up and raise them toward the ceiling. This will flip the coat over his head onto his back. Voila!

When choosing clothing:

- When your child tries on shoes, look for shoes with wide openings when you pull the tongue out. It will be easier for your child to get their foot in. Certain materials are easier for children to work with when it comes to shoes. Leather tends to be stiff and makes it difficult to get their foot in so look for more flexible materials.
- Shoes that are too big or too small will inhibit their gross motor movements – check shoe size regularly and replace if needed.
- Velcro shoes are easiest until they are ready to start to learn to tie shoelaces (between ages 5 to 8).
- Look for good quality, large zippers that are easy to fasten – once your child starts to try zippers around age 3 or 4, it will be much easier if the zipper fastens smoothly
- Provide loose, elastic waist pants, especially if your child is toilet training. Buttons can be learned later (age: 4 or later)
- Try shirts with picture or logo on the front to help your child work out which is the back and which is the front
- Provide mittens instead of gloves. It is easier to learn to get a thumb in as opposed to four fingers.



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