

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT LEARNING OF DRESSING SKILLS



- 1) **Verbal cues** - provide simple and brief instructions; one-two word prompts during performance of task(s).
- 2) **Modelling** – demonstration of task; ensure eye contact and that he/she can see your face and body gestures during the task.
- 3) **Partial assistance** – some physical support during portion of task i.e. supporting elbow when searching; supporting hip while sitting to remove item of clothing.
- 4) **Motivation** – use of verbal praise, reward, corrective feedback.
- 5) **Environment** – perform task(s) in natural environment when practical to integrate into normal routines i.e. putting on coat before going to the playground on outing Vs just practicing in isolation.
- 6) **Positioning** – allow sitting to complete activity either:
 - Classroom supportive sitting chair.
 - Bolster on bench during P.E. class.
 - Buggy if appropriate when going home.
- 7) **Practice** – opportunities throughout the school week for repeated practice to reinforce memory of skills.
 - Use a variety of different materials and equipment to generalise skill when possible.
 - Provide structure to environment: control distractions.

EARLY SKILL AREAS TO SUPPORT DRESSING AND UNDRRESSING ACTIVITIES

A)

- Provide plenty of activities that involve watching hand movement. Easels, chalkboard, wall mural paper, and other upright surfaces require child to place hand(s) at eye level. This provides a good view of hand movements and the resulting lines, shapes and pictures.
- Any toy or game that requires visual guidance of movement may help to develop visual motor skills.
- Visual tasks to encourage child to:
 - Visually attend to objects and coordinate eye movement as objects move across visual fields and midline.
 - Ability to maintain gaze with objects and eye contact with others and direct reach/grasp to designated object/person.

B)

- Engage in tasks that require hand stability and finger dexterity:
 - Picking up and releasing objects to designated places or containers at will or when requested to by others.
 - Ability to use single fingers independently of others.
 - Ability to perform different actions with each hand at the same time i.e. hold bead in one hand and thread string with the other hand (transfer hand to hand).



C)

- Communication and language:
 - Receptive skills to understand simple directions related to dressing i.e. top – bottom, front – back.
 - Body part awareness and vocabulary associated with motor skills i.e. arm through sleeve – in and out.
 - Cause and effect – cognitive skills.

D)

- Other potential goal areas:

A child with weak visual-motor skills will have difficulty achieving accuracy when performing motor tasks that depend on visual guidance. When adapting activities for this child, consider:

 - Ways to modify visual-motor activities so they require less accurate movement.
 - Providing sensory cues (tactile, auditory, or visual) to help guide movement.
 - Minimizing visual-motor aspects of activities whenever possible.
 - Changing classroom expectations to match the child's level of ability.
 - Allow more time for child to complete visual-motor activities, if this improves performance.