

Adaptive Skills Lesson week 7: Ways to teach your child how to zipper and button.



Dressing and undressing oneself with clothes that have buttons or zippers can be difficult for children. Here are suggestions to help your child gain those skills needed to be successful.

Start early: Help your child when they are very young on building their fine motor skills. To help your child with this skill here are some recommended activities to do at home. No need to go out and buy anything new. Filling up empty containers (no lid on) with items you already have at home is another way to work on fine motor skills.

Shape sorter toys

Puzzles with pegs

Puzzles with knobs

Toys with moving parts



Pre-fastening skills: Once your child has had plenty exposure to those early skills here are some manipulation activities that require your child to use both hands together.



Stringing beads



Lacing cards



Pushing sticks into styrofoam or chenille stems into a colander.

"Feed" the tennis ball game.



Beginning Fastener Activities: Here are some activities that are closer to the real thing:

- Put loose coins or buttons in an empty container through the lid (cut a slot in the lid).
- Pass loose buttons through button holes on real clothing (clothing not on body).
- Practice hooking zippers and fastening buttons on clothing that is not on the body to make it easier to see and manipulate.

Ready to Go! Now kids will be ready to practice with clothing that is actually on their bodies.

- Start with the largest buttons and zippers you can find.
- Lots of repeated hand over hand practice for zippers helps kids feel and visualize how to hook the two sides together.
- Add a ribbon, ring, or string loop to zippers on kids coats and sweatshirts to make a large zipper pull. Examples are pictured below.



Adaptive ways to help your child with buttoning. Attach the same color dot sticker on the button and next to the hole where the button should go through. This provides a helpful visual for children.



BREAD TIE ZIPPER ACTIVITY

This simple ribbon activity uses plastic bread ties. First, tie a knot on both ends of a wide ribbon. Pinch the ribbon and slide the bread ties onto the ribbon. That's it! Your zipper tool is done. Let your child practice "zipping" the bread ties up and down the ribbon.

Helpful websites:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Teach-Your-Kid-to-Use-a-Zipper>

<https://www.missjaimeot.com/how-to-adapt-buttoning-and-zipping/>

<https://therapyfunzone.net/blog/the-visual-motor-aspect-of-buttons-and-zippers/>