How to build a dressing routine at home

Find a natural time of the day to have your child get dressed to make it part of their daily routine.

Leave yourself plenty of time so that you and your child don’t feel rushed.

Gradually increase how much you expect your child to do on their own, helping them less and less as they demonstrate independence.

Praise your child when they do something independently as well as when you have helped them.

Opportunities to practice dressing skills with your child throughout the day:

Upon awakening

Before a meal - change shirts instead of using a bib

To go outside - put on socks, shoes and/or coat; zip

Coming in from outside play - remove shoes and coat; unzip

For a messy activity, such as painting - change into an old shirt

During diaper changes (pull pants up/down) or during toileting routines (practice fasteners, zipping)

Before bath time - remove clothing

Before bed - put pajamas on

Ways to assist your child while still building independence

Point to the clothing item they need to get or to where a clothing item goes on their body

Partially assist by guiding their hands, getting them started or adjusting the clothing item while they put it on

Hand over hand with your child, fully supporting them through each step. Over time, reduce how much support you give, using partial assistance when possible

Being able to care for themselves is important for your child’s independence!