

Practical Tips To Help Your Child Dress Themselves Independently

For a child, learning how to dress themselves is a big step, and one that is best achieved in increments. Even children as young as 18 months can begin to help get themselves dressed, if the right items are chosen for them to wear. So what steps can you as a parent take to make the process a little easier for your child? Read on to find out!

1. Try the flip and zip

This is an easy way to help children learn to put on a coat. Lay your child's coat in front of them with the hood or collar at their feet. Have your child bend down and put their hands in the arm holes. When their arms are partially in the arm holes, have your child stand up and raise their arms above their head. This causes the jacket to flip up and over their head. And voila! The coat is on!

2. Choose simple outfits

Clothes with buckles, zippers and lots of buttons are difficult for children to manage. When your child is first learning to dress himself, choose simple tee shirts, sweaters, and soft pants with elastic waists. Along with the tees and pants, dresses and leggings that aren't too tight are good options for girls. The less your child has to fuss with, the more successful they will be.

3. Slip on or Velcro shoes

Until your child is able to tie her shoes independently, it's best to buy slip on or Velcro shoes. This avoids frustration, especially when everyone is rushing to leave the house. Allow for plenty of practice with tie shoes, but save them for a time when you're not in a hurry.

4. Encourage practice

Give your child plenty of opportunities to try out zipping their own coat, buttoning their shirt, or putting on their socks. Step in to help with only the parts of the process that your child seems to be struggling with, and only if they ask (or for a toddler, start to get visibly upset). Dealing with a little challenge is a good thing, and makes for a huge sense of satisfaction when they're finally successful.

With the right clothing and a little practice, your child will be on the path to independent dressing in no time at all!