Children's Community Occupational Therapy

Dressing Skills Steps

General Advice

😊 Dress in the same place each day - use a stool or mat to sit on at home.
😊 Help the child to organise their clothes prior to putting on - the right way around and front side uppermost. Look for a pattern on the front and/or tag on back.
😊 Give verbal cues (explain what to do step by step), physical cues (hand over hand) or visual cues (picture chart).
😊 ‘Backward Chaining’: The adult starts the action and the child finishes it. This encourages confidence building. The child can do more as confidence and skills increase.

Pre-Dressing Skills

😊 Play with and talk about dressing a big doll.
😊 Try dressing up play, use masks and wigs, as well as oversized clothing.
😊 Practise dressing at relaxed times e.g. not in a rush.

Early Stages of Dressing -

😊 remove unfastened coat
😊 remove shoes if laces untied
😊 help pull down pants, then by self
😊 find armholes in pullover shirt (put over head by adult)
😊 remove pull-down pants with elastic waist
😊 assist in pulling on socks, then by self (may be with heel on top)
😊 put on front-button coat or shirt
😊 unbutton large buttons
😊 put on pullover shirt with minimal assistance
😊 put on shoes without fasteners (may be on wrong foot)
😊 zip and unzip jacket (once on track)

Intermediate Stages of Dressing Skills

😊 need assistance to remove pullover top
😊 button large front buttons then button series of 3-4 buttons
😊 find front of clothing
😊 unzip zip on jacket, separating zipper
😊 put on mittens
😊 un buckle shoes or belt
😊 dress with supervision (help with front and back)
😊 remove pullover garment independently
😊 zip jacket zipper (including latching)
😊 put on socks correctly
😊 put on shoes, assistance tying laces

Advanced Stages of Dressing Skills

😊 lace shoes
😊 consistently identify front and back of garments
😊 put belt in loops