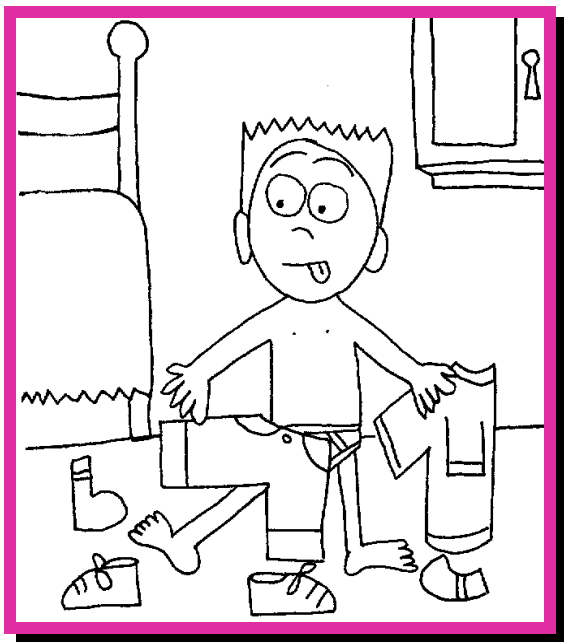


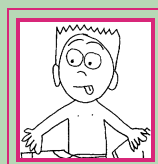
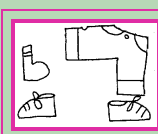
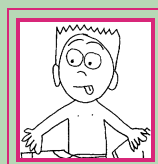
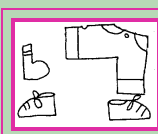
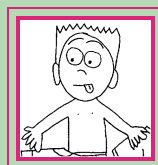
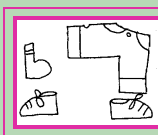
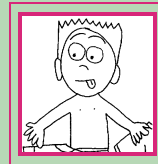
Self-care Skills

PLAY
IDEAS 10

ABOUT
SELF-
CARE



Development of self-care skills is an important part of child development. Children who have been encouraged to 'have a go' and given the time and support to develop independence at mealtimes and in dressing, grooming and toileting will show greater initiative and confidence in their play and learning. Independence also helps your child when settling into new environments such as kindergarten or preschool.



SELF-CARE AND DEVELOPMENT



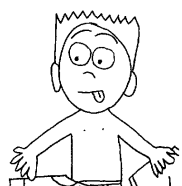
Babies

Babies show the beginnings of self-care skills when they put their hands to the bottle or cup as they are being fed or as they begin to hold onto a spoon or eat simple finger foods. Older babies can be encouraged to 'help' wash hands, pull socks off and lift arms to have a shirt pulled off.



Toddlers

Toddlers want to do everything themselves! Prepare meals that your toddler can eat independently (and messily). Let toddlers 'have a go' at washing and drying themselves, cleaning their teeth, brushing their hair, packing away toys, and taking their off clothes. Do not expect total cooperation! Around 18-24 months introduce the potty by encouraging your toddler to watch others use the toilet, becoming familiar with the potty, having time with nappies off and talking about toilet time.



Young Children

Better skill and control means young children can carry out more tasks on their own, although supervision, encouragement and follow-up will still be necessary. Children will be managing a spoon and fork to do simple spreading and cutting. They can wash and dry themselves, brush their teeth and hair, dress and undress, but may still need assistance to complete these tasks well. Small fastenings, laces and buckles may still be tricky and will not be mastered until 5 or 6 years old.



P.A.L. PLAY AND LEARNING PROGRAM
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WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Make routine, everyday tasks a fun time - use bathtime to sing songs and blow bubbles, tickle your child's toes as you take his socks off, use mealtimes to chat and make silly faces.
- Encourage your child to 'have a go' - give him a flannel to wash with while in the bath, give him a spoon to hold while being fed or let him pull his socks off.
- Reassure your child that mistakes are 'ok' and praise his or her attempts at self care tasks. Your child will be confident to try new or 'tricky' things, if they feel secure that you don't expect them to get it right all the time.
- Talk about what you are doing as you do it - 'now we'll wash your face', 'let's take your socks off' and 'where are your shoes?'.
- Let your child watch you and other family members as you carry out self-care tasks - washing your face, cleaning your teeth, using the toilet, dressing, eating.
- Allow plenty of time for your child to carry out self care tasks.
- Allow opportunity for repetition and practice of self care tasks.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Always supervise your child at bath time.
- Supervise children when using kitchen appliances, knives or scissors.

SOME ACTIVITIES TO TRY

- **Breakdown tasks** and activities into easy, manageable steps.
- **Set up for success** Set-up tasks so that they can be most easily managed by your child, such as cutting food up into bite size pieces or having well defined places to pack away toys.
- **Equipment to make tasks easier and safer** You can have a non-slip mat under baby's bowl when feeding, use a high sided bowl to reduce spills, use a drink cup that has a lid to avoid spills, use child size cutlery, use a footstool to reach the bathroom basin, use little steps and a toilet seat to make toileting more secure, choose clothing with bigger buttons and shoes with velcro fastenings.
- **Daily routine** Help older children organise themselves to carry out self-care tasks as part of a predictable daily routine. You can create simple charts that have pictures or words as reminders about what to do next. Use familiar timing, location and equipment.
- **'Backward chaining'** This is used to teach tricky tasks. Have your child complete the very last step of the task (eg, pulling their sock off after you have pulled it down over their ankle). Then introduce the second last step once the last one is mastered and so on. This way, your child is successful at the end of the task and avoids frustration.
- **A dress-up box** is a fun way to practice ties, buttons, laces, zips, clasps. Let your child experiment with your old clothes, bags, shoes, hats, and scarves.

PLAY IDEAS 10

ABOUT SELF-CARE

