

INDEPENDENCE IN SELF CARE ROUTINES

**A Curriculum for Professionals and Parents of
Children with Autism and Developmental Conditions**



MODULE 3 DRESSING SKILLS

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Nidhi Singhal, PhD

MODULE 3 DRESSING SKILLS

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Finally, we are honoured to receive the Foreword from Dr Wenn Lawson. An autistic advocate, a psychologist and a lecturer, Dr Wenn Lawson is a well-respected and highly knowledgeable expert on autism who has authored fifteen books and numerous papers, and regularly delivers keynote speeches and trainings at international events. Currently, Dr Lawson is a Teaching Fellow with Birmingham University's online Masters autism course. He is on the board of and an advisor to several educational and research councils in Australia. He has also been running his own business for more than 20 years now.

Thank You!

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The resources in this book are provided for informational purposes and are not meant to replace the judgement and training of parents and professionals.

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DRESSING

REMOVING AND WEARING clothes independently is an important skill for all children, especially since it is also an integral part of achieving independence in toileting and bathing activities. In addition to wearing and removing different kinds of upper and lower garments, socks and shoes, this also involves being able to work through a range of fasteners such as buttons, buckles, hooks, Velcro, laces or strings. Challenges with motor development (such as fine motor skills necessary to open and close buttons), sensory processing (like sensitivity to certain fabrics), and strong preferences (for example to specific colours, collar styles, or even a particular set of shirt and shorts) combined with possible challenges in organising, planning and sequencing can make this everyday task much more difficult for children with autism.

Often, dressing or undressing the child yourself is much faster than teaching the child. Although convenient, it does not enable the child growing into an independent young person who can care for his or her own needs. This is especially important for children with autism since many may continue to follow the sequence of steps learnt in childhood, into their youth and adulthood. As mentioned earlier, some autistic people find it difficult to intuitively understand that expectations change as one grows older. So, some may not inherently understand why it was okay for them to walk out with or without undergarments at age 4, but frowned upon at age 14 or quite understand the implication of words like 'shame shame'. So, talking to the child as s/he undresses to use the toilet or gets dressed after a bath can help the child become aware, without having to explicitly teach about the otherwise abstract concept of privacy. Likewise, some autistic individuals may be unaware of how others perceive them based on their clothes and their appearances. So, these are also opportunities to teach the child about clothes or how to decide clothes depending on the occasion or the weather or the season and so on.

Here are a few things that can make teaching dressing skills a positive experience for the child and the adult.

- 👤 Designate a 'dressing area' where the child takes off and wears clothes. This could very well be the bathroom. If the dressing area for the child is outside the bathroom or in a shared space, simple things can reinforce the concept of privacy without actually having to teach a child.

DRESSING

- ✓ Identify a space that is slightly private. This could be a specific room, or a corner of a room separated by a curtain, or simply behind a wall or a cupboard.
 - ✓ If not fully dressed, ensure the child is appropriately wrapped in a towel when moving between the dressing area and the bathroom.
 - ✓ Draw the curtain and/or close the door when the child begins to dress or undress.
 - ✓ Have the child consistently undress and dress only in that area.
 - ✓ Limit access of others to the 'dressing area' when the child is using the space.
 - ✓ Have the child take off / wear undergarments only in the bathroom.
- 👤 Organize the space and clothes ahead of time.

- ✓ In the dressing area, have consistent places to keep the removed clothes in and similarly a separate place to keep the fresh clothes. This could be a bucket, basket, hook, or a clothesline, or a flat surface like bed or a stool within easy reach of the child.



- ✓ Ensure clothes are in the correct position. Check that the seams are turned inside, front is facing away from the body when held up by the child so that the child is wearing clothes correctly.
- ✓ Pile or sequence clothes in the order in which the child will use or need them. For instance, put towel on top or closest to the child, place underwear and undershirt thereafter and so on.
- ✓ If the child finds it easier, have him/her sit on a chair and use a footstool when practicing wearing or taking off shoes. Alternately, have him or her sit on the floor if they so prefer.
- ✓ Support the child to wear a garment. Hold the opening to arm, leg or neck close to the child's body to make it easier for him/her to slip in.
- ✓ Have a mirror for a child to look in when getting dressed or afterwards.



Understand the child's sensory preferences related to:

- ✓ Colours and patterns – that may be visually appealing, distracting or distressing for a child.

- ✓ Fabrics – many prefer to wear old clothes that have become soft after repeated washes, or prefer soft cotton rather than crisp, starched cotton. If so, wash the garment a few times before using it or use a fabric softener. Some are uncomfortable with synthetic clothes, socks and even towels. Similarly, many children prefer soft or cotton towels while others prefer using a gamcha. It is especially important to have innerwear of fabrics and textures that the child is comfortable in through the day. It may be relatively easier for some children to tolerate a less preferred fabric on an outer garment. Clothes tags and seams that may also be bothersome for some children with tactile sensitivities.
- ✓ Fitting – many children are comfortable wearing loose fitting clothes. It is also easier to teach a child to independently take off or wear loose fitting clothes like pyjamas, rather than a pair of tight jeans. However, some children do not like the light touch of loose clothes or from short sleeves against their skin. Many prefer wearing tight clothes, or shirts with long sleeves and long pants. If so, have the child wear a snug-fit vest and/or lowers that the child is comfortable in. Many children are likely to feel comfortable wearing a loose t-shirt over a snug vest. Teach the child to take off and wear the outer garments independently and provide the support the child requires to take off or wear the tight innerwear. Children may have



preferences for fitting and length of socks as well. Some children prefer keeping their feet covered and are comfortable wearing socks and shoes, while others prefer staying bare feet, resist wearing socks, and prefer slippers, sandals and open toe shoes when going out.

- ✓ Weight – some children find heavier garments comforting and like wearing denim jackets, winter jackets, sweaters, and other such garments. Others are more comfortable in lighter fabrics.
- ✓ Smells – many children have strong likes or dislikes for specific brands of washing soaps, detergents, or fabric softeners used to wash clothes.
- 👤 Incorporate simple and creative solutions on everyday clothes to meet the child's skills and needs. As shown in the examples, some things that help:
 - ✓ Cut off the labels or clothes tags if they bother the child.
 - ✓ Wear undergarments and/or clothes inside out if the child has concerns with seams.



- ✓ Stitch simple loops on lower garments that the child can easily hold to pull them up.

DRESSING

- ✓ Lower garments such as pants, pyjamas, and skirts often have fasteners such as drawstrings, buttons, zippers etc. If possible, replace other fasteners with elastic bands and stitch up any openings. This will make it easy for the child to independently take off or wear the garments.
- ✓ Using Velcro is another alternative that is especially useful in garments such as pants, jeans, or jackets that have buttons or zippers. If possible, replace the button or zipper with Velcro. When it is not possible to take off the buttons / zippers, add Velcro such that the child only has to work with Velcro to take off or wear a garment. Most children will find this relatively easier and are likely to achieve independence sooner. Some ideas are given here.



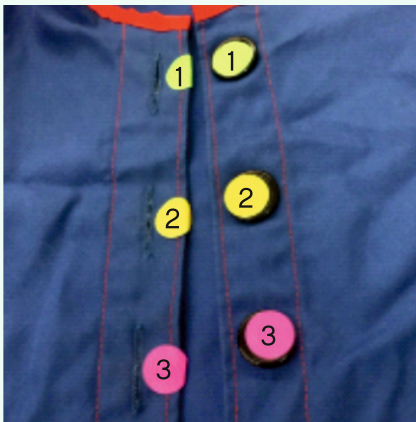


- ✓ As shown here, if the zipper tab is small or difficult for the child to hold, extend the tab by adding a metal loop (like those found on a key chain) or an attractive thick thread or fabric. This will make it easier for the child to grip the zipper tab and pull it up or down.



- ✓ Most young children find it hard to use buttons. If possible, stitch up a buttoned shirt so that only the top one or two buttons need to be buttoned. So, even though it looks like a front-open shirt, the child can easily take off or wear the shirt over his or her head.

- ✓ If the child can work buttons with some support, have large size buttons and have slightly larger button holes to make buttoning easier on the garment.



- ✓ You may also number or colour code buttons (as shown in the picture alongside). This makes it easier for the child to match them and button the garment correctly.

- ✓ Draw a stripe on the top of the socks where the toes fit or have socks with toes and/or heels in a colour different from the rest of the sock. This helps the child understand that the coloured section fits over the heel and toes. Simple loops on socks can help the child easily pull them up.



- ✓ Tie shoelaces such that child can easily slip in and out without having to work the laces every time. Alternately, use slip-on shoes or shoes and belts with Velcro instead of buckles / laces.
- 👤 Our clothes for special occasions such as festivals and weddings are often embellished with sequins, laces, mirrors, stones, beads etc. We further accessorise salwar-kameez, lehnga-cholis, kurtas and sherwanis with stoles, dupattas, scarves, and headgears. Little girls may also wear bindis, earrings, bracelets, and bangles. Boys may wear clothes that require them to be buttoned up to the neck such as when they wear a sherwani or a bow-tie. Footwear too is in keeping with the occasion. If the child is comfortable in his or her clothes, s/he is likely to have a better time and have a positive association with festive occasions. However, if the child is uncomfortable, it is worth the effort to identify clothes that meet the child's sensory preferences.

DRESSING SKILLS

- ✓ Identify 'dressy' clothes in fabrics that the child is comfortable in and which will be in keeping with the weather that the child will be wearing it in.
- ✓ Choose garments without embellishments near the collars and sleeves where it is likely to come in direct contact with skin.
- ✓ Introduce accessories such as dupattas, bangles, bindis, etc. at the child's pace.
- ✓ Ensure that the child is wearing innerwear that meets his or her sensory preferences.
- ✓ Start with short durations. For instance, only in the beginning or for the most important part of the event such as for the





prayer ceremony, or while tying rakhi etc. Have the child wear more comfortable clothes for the rest of the event. Gradually increase the duration.



- 🧑🏫 Teach skills that are meaningful to the child's life.
- ✓ Start teaching simple skills and then move to more complex. Removing clothes is easier than wearing clothes. Similarly, opening fasteners is easier than closing them.

DRESSING

- ✓ Practice with garments, footwear, accessories including school bags, pencil boxes etc. that are most commonly used in child's everyday life at home, school, creches or other environments. So, if the child does not wear buckled shoes on a regular basis, it can be lower on the list of skills to teach.
 - ✓ Likewise, learning to manipulate complicated fasteners such as strings, buttons, or buckles may be a lower priority since there are many options to buy or tailor garments and find a way to work around these. So, if strings are hard, it may be best to let it be for now.
 - ✓ When the child is ready, use left / right wherever applicable. These words have purposefully not been used to allow for individualization.
-
-  Review the illustrations provided for each activity when beginning to teach a skill. Picture cards of different items of clothing have also been provided in the respective volume of the activity with illustrations.
 -  Refer to other modules to identify activities that may be integrated. For instance, steps to get undressed or wear clothes may be integrated with bathing activity as described in module *Personal Care* or alongside toilet related activities as described in *Toileting Skills*.




FASTENERS



VELCRO

CLOTHES, FOOTWEAR AND ACCESSORIES such as belts available for children these days often have Velcro as fasteners. Velcro is relatively easier to open and close and a good place to start as most children can learn to open and close them independently. Instead of using pincer grip, many children find their own unique way such as gripping the strap in palm which works just as well.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Lap board with Velcro straps
- ✓ Variety of garments, belts, footwear and other articles with Velcro straps from everyday use



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualized to child's skill set and family environment:

Open Velcro straps

- ✓ Open Velcro with large size loops on a Velcro board
- ✓ Practice with different sizes and lengths of Velcro strap on a Velcro board
- ✓ Practice on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice opening Velcro straps on a variety of everyday articles and clothes when the child has them on

Close Velcro straps

- ✓ Practice closing with large size loops on a Velcro board
- ✓ Practice with different sizes and lengths of Velcro strap on a Velcro board
- ✓ Practice on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice closing Velcro straps on a variety of everyday articles and clothes when the child has them on

Suggested Words to Use


Open Velcro Strap

1. Open
2. Pull strap (if required to remove from the loop)

Close Velcro Strap

1. Put in (strap in the loop)
2. Pull strap
3. Close (press down on Velcro strap)

Teaching the Sequence

 Using the suggested words, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*. For instance, to close Velcro strap:

- ✓ Focus on teaching the child to independently carry out the last step: press down to close Velcro. Support the child through all preceding steps. As described earlier, gradually reduce the amount of support provided on the last step, so that the child is able to learn to do this step independently.



- ✓ When the child independently presses strap, focus on achieving independence in pulling Velcro strap. Support the child through preceding steps as required. Gradually reduce support on the step so s/he is able to independently pull strap. At all times, have the child press down on the Velcro strap.
- ✓ When the child independently pulls the Velcro strap, focus on achieving independence in the step before that i.e. inserting the strap through the loop. Continue to have the child independently pull out and press down the Velcro strap. Gradually reduce support on this step so the child learns to insert strap in the loop. Depending on the child's strengths, the adult may start teaching this step with full support and then fade support away in the following sequence:
 - Adult assists the child by inserting the strap $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the loop and then asks child to pull the strap back the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child by inserting the strap $\frac{1}{2}$ of the way through the loop and then asks child to pull the strap back the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child by inserting the strap $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way through the loop and then asks child to pull the strap back the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child to position the strap near the loop and then asks the child to pull the strap back the rest of the way.

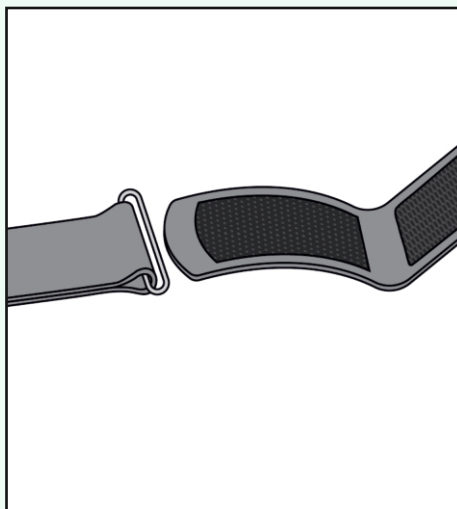
Similarly teach to open Velcro so that the child can independently open and close Velcro straps on different garments and articles.

- 👤 Follow the child's pace. In the beginning, provide the support the child requires to complete each step and then reduce it gradually. The level of support that a child requires may vary at each step and the child may become independent in some steps sooner than the others. For instance, many children may need relatively less support to press down the Velcro strap to close it and more support to put the strap through the loop.

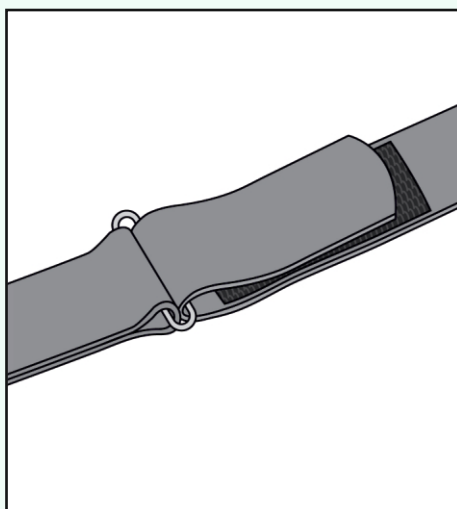
Things to Keep in Mind

- 👤 Begin with large loops to insert Velcro straps and gradually move to regular size loops.
- 👤 Practice inserting the Velcro strap through the loop as a part of other activities.
- 👤 To strengthen the concept of privacy, practice the skill in a room when wearing or taking off clothes.

Velcro Open



Velcro Close






ZIPPERS

ZIPPERS are relatively easier fasteners to manipulate for most children and can be introduced with young children. Commonly found on a variety of garments, bags, backpacks, and other articles of common use, learning to operate zippers is relevant and applicable in a child's everyday life.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

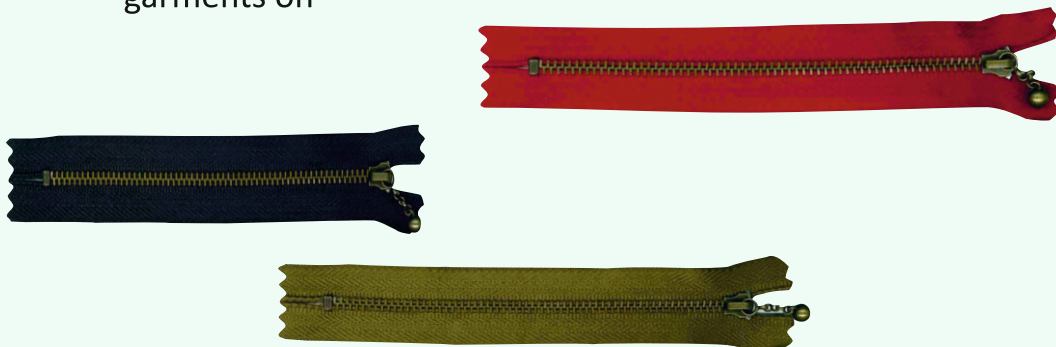
- ✓ Lap board with unconnected zippers
- ✓ Variety of garments (e.g. pants) and other articles (e.g. bags, pouch style stationary bags, backpacks etc.) of everyday use with a connected zipper (i.e. closed at one end)
- ✓ Variety of garments (e.g. jackets) and other articles of everyday use with an unconnected zipper (i.e. open at both ends)



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualised to child's skill set and family environment:

- 👤 Unzip connected and unconnected zippers of different sizes
 - ✓ Unzip on a zip board
 - ✓ Practice unzipping on garments (off body) and other articles
 - ✓ Practice on different garments when the child has these garments on
- 👤 Zip connected zippers of different sizes, ensuring that the bottom end of the zip is connected
 - ✓ Zip connected zippers on a zip board
 - ✓ Practice on garments (off body) and other articles
 - ✓ Practice on different garments when the child has these garments on



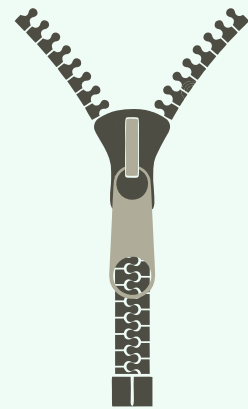
ZIPPERS

- 👤 Zip unconnected zippers of different sizes, ensuring that the bottom end of the zip is unconnected
 - ✓ Zip unconnected zippers on a zip board
 - ✓ Practice on garments (off body) and other articles
 - ✓ Practice on different garments when the child has these garments on

Suggested Words to Use

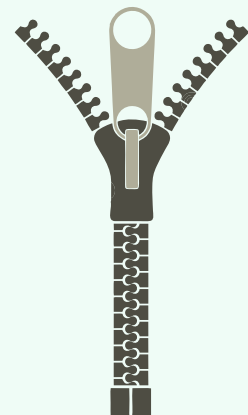
👤 *Unzip Connected and Unconnected Zippers*

1. Hold (material near/above zipper tab)
2. Hold zip (with other hand)
3. Pull zip



👤 *Zip Connected Zipper*

1. Hold (material near / bottom of zipper tab)
2. Hold zip (with other hand)
3. Pull zip



Zip Unconnected Zipper



1. Slide Zip (so zipper tab in start position)
2. Hold (zipper end)
3. Hold (other zipper end with other hand)
4. Put in (zipper tab into the zipper box)
5. Hold (material near/bottom of zipper tab)
6. Hold zip (with other hand)
7. Pull zip

Teaching the Sequence

- 👤 Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
- 👤 Follow the child's pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually.

Things to Keep in Mind

- 👤 Practice zippers with bags, backpacks, and other related items in child's everyday life to facilitate independence at home but also in school, creches and other environments.

ZIPPERS

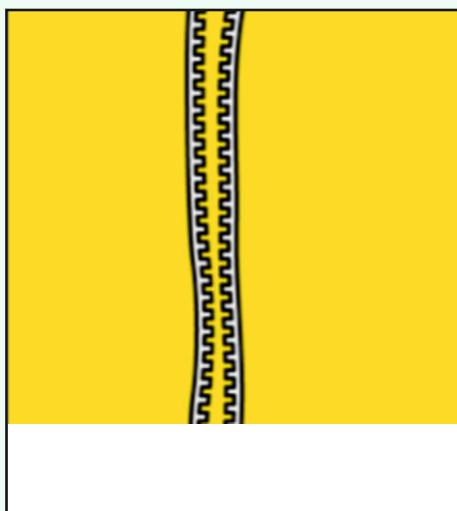
- Since the movement is different, practice with a range of articles with zippers placed vertically (as found in garments), horizontally (as in bags, pouches) and other shapes e.g. semi-circle (as in backpacks).



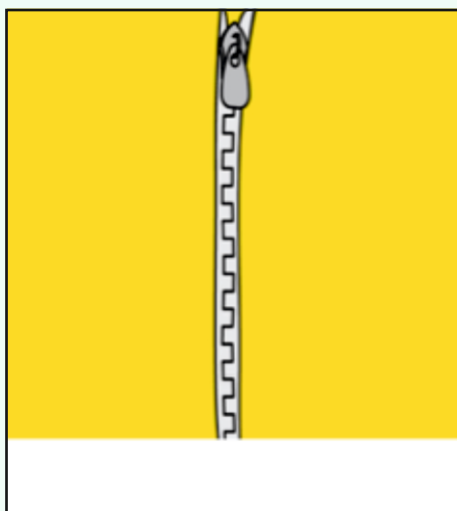
- Start with zippers that smoothly slide up and down, with large tabs that are easy for the child to hold.
- In the beginning, open or close some part of the zipper, so that the child has to open and close zip only part of the way. Gradually increase the length that the child has to zip or unzip.
- Some children try to pull zipper on jacket as far up as it can go, often feeling, though not necessarily expressing, the discomfort. Telling the child along with a visual mark on the zipper (e.g. using a coloured pen) helps the child learn where to stop the zipper.
- When teaching to zip unconnected zippers, start by having zipper tab in correct position and encourage the child to check that the tab is in the correct position. Once the child has learnt the skill, position the zipper tab at different lengths and encourage the child to set the zipper tab in the correct position.
- To strengthen the concept of privacy, practice the skill in a room when wearing or taking off clothes.

ZIPPERS

Zipper Open



Zipper Close






HOOKS


HOOKS are commonly seen in pants and trousers. Belts too often have similar type of clasps. If relevant in the child's everyday life, the skill may be introduced to children who use both hands simultaneously.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Lap board with hooks
- ✓ Everyday use items with buckles of different styles and sizes



 Check that hook clasps are not too tight for a child to open or close

Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualised to child's skill set and family environment:

 Unhook

- ✓ Unhook large size hooks on a hook board

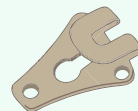
- ✓ Practice unhooking with different sizes and styles of clasps on a hook board
- ✓ Practice unhooking on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice unhooking on a variety of everyday articles and clothes when the child has them on

Close clasp



- ✓ Hook large size clasps on a hook board
- ✓ Practice with different sizes and styles of clasps on hook board
- ✓ Practice hooking on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice hooking on a variety of everyday articles and clothes when the child has them on

Suggested Words to Use



Unhook

1. Hold (with both hands)
2. Open



Hook

1. Hold hook (with one hand)
2. Hold edge (with other hand)
3. Close

Teaching the Sequence

- 🧑‍🚶 Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
- 🧑‍🚶 Follow the child's pace. Start with providing as much support as the child requires and reduce it gradually.

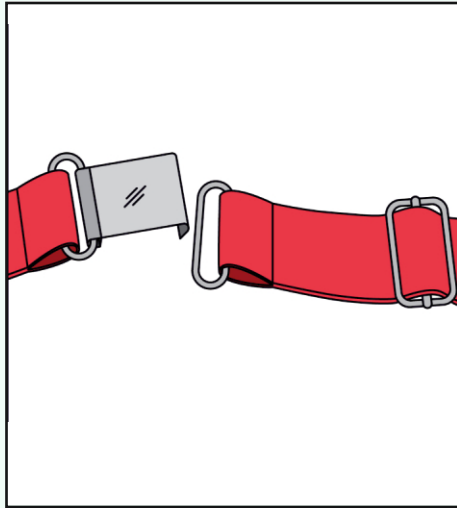
Things to Keep in Mind

- 🧑‍🚶 Practice with clasps of the kind commonly found on school belts, pants, and other accessories for children.
- 🧑‍🚶 Sometimes, belts and jackets for children also have buckle-style clasps that are commonly found on car seat. Practice, if commonly used in the child's environment.
- 🧑‍🚶 Gradually increase the number of hooks that a child is required to manipulate.
- 🧑‍🚶 To strengthen the concept of privacy, try practising the skill in the confines of a room when wearing or taking off clothes.
- 🧑‍🚶 For many children with autism, there are many skills that need to be taught and it is critical to prioritize what we want to teach. If the child finds this difficult, use garments and accessories with other kinds of fasteners or adapt clothes as described earlier.

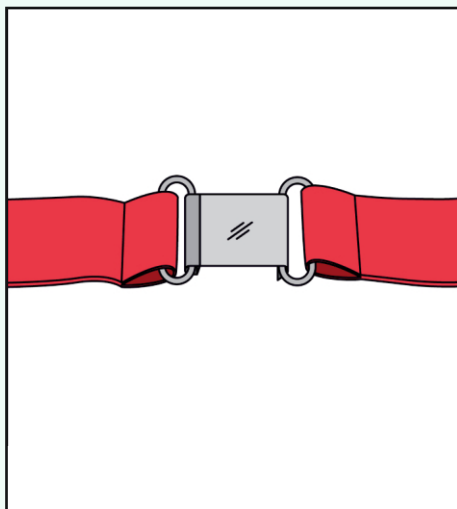


HOOKS

Hooks Open



Hooks Close






SNAP STYLE BUTTONS

SNAP STYLE BUTTONS are much simpler than the conventional buttons with eye-hole. Use of these is increasing on children's garments and other commonly used articles in everyday life such as bags and pouch style stationary kits. Children with some finger strength and minimal tactile issues or finger sensitivity often find it an easier fastener to work with.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Lap board with snap style buttons
- ✓ Clothes and other articles from everyday use with snap style buttons



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualised to child's skill set and family environment:

Open snap style buttons

- ✓ Open snap style buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice with different sized snap style buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice opening snap style buttons on a variety of everyday articles including clothes when the child has them on

Close snap style buttons

- ✓ Close snap style buttons on a lap board
- ✓ Practice with different sized snap style buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice on a variety of garments (off body) and other items from child's everyday life
- ✓ Practice closing snap style buttons on a variety of everyday articles including clothes when the child has them on

Suggested Words to Use

Open Snap Style Button



1. Hold (one side of the snap style button with one hand)
2. Hold (other side of the snap style button with the other hand)
3. Open



Close Snap Style Button

1. Hold (one side of the snap style button with one hand)
2. Hold (other side of the snap style button with the other hand)
3. Press/Close (top of snap style button directly over bottom of snap to connect)

Teaching the Sequence

-  Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
-  Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.

Things to Keep in Mind

- 👤 Begin with large-sized, snap style buttons before moving to smaller ones.



- 👤 Start with only one or two buttons that the child has to manipulate. Depending on the child's pace, gradually increase the number of buttons.
- 👤 When practicing taking off or wearing clothes, get the child to open or close only the last button. Gradually increase the number.

- 👤 When the child begins to close several buttons, close the first button to position clothes appropriately. This is especially useful when wearing clothes like shirts and jackets
- 👤 To strengthen the concept of privacy, practice the skill in a room when wearing or taking off clothes.

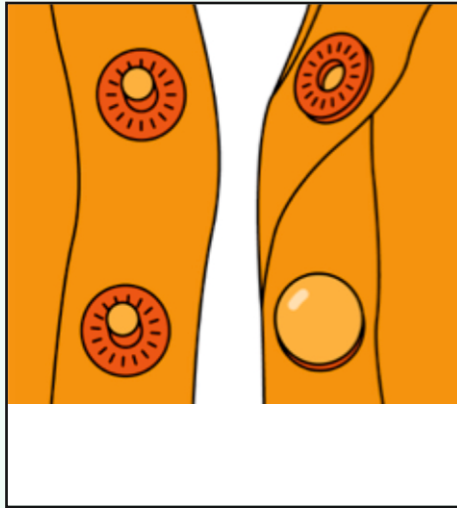


SNAP STYLE BUTTONS

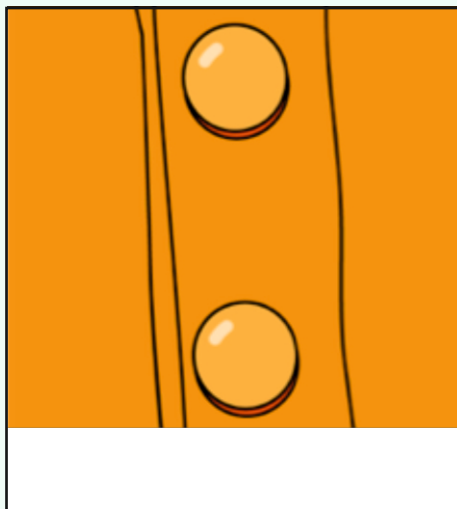
- 👤 For many children with autism, there are many skills that need to be taught and it is critical to prioritize what we want to teach. If the child finds this difficult, use garments and accessories with other kinds of fasteners or adapt clothes as described earlier.

SNAP STYLE BUTTONS

Snap Open



Snap Close






BUTTONS

BUTTONS with eye-holes are one of the more common fasteners found in most garments and accessories. Opening and closing buttons is a rather complex skill for any child and is best introduced with an older child with necessary motor skills and eye hand coordination required to button and unbutton.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Button board(s) with different sized buttons
- ✓ Clothes and other articles (from everyday use) with buttons



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualised to child's skill set and family environment:

Unbutton

- ✓ Start with large size buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice opening different sized buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice unbuttoning on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes (off body)
- ✓ Practice unbuttoning clothes when the child has the clothes on



Close Button

- ✓ Start with large size buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice closing different sized buttons on a buttoning board
- ✓ Practice buttoning on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes (off body)
- ✓ Practice buttoning clothes when the child has the clothes on



Suggested Words to Use

Unbutton


1. Hold (button and fabric with each hand)
2. Open (with one hand)

Button

1. Hold (button hole)
2. Hold button (with other hand)
3. Close / Button



Teaching the Sequence

 Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in *Overview*. For instance, when teaching to button:

- ✓ Focus on teaching the child to independently carry out the last step, pull on button to close it. Support the child through all preceding steps. Gradually reduce support on this step, so the child can independently close the button. Depending on the child's strengths, start by providing the support the child requires and gradually lessen support in the following order:







- Adult assists the child to push the button $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the buttonhole and then asks the child to pull the button the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child to push the button $\frac{1}{2}$ of the way through the buttonhole and then asks the child to pull the button the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child to push the button $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way through the buttonhole and then asks the child to pull the button the rest of the way.
 - Adult assists the child to position the button near the buttonhole and then asks the child to pull the button the rest of the way.
- ✓ When the child independently pulls out the button, similarly focus on achieving independence in holding the button and



the buttonhole correctly. Once again, support the child through the steps preceding this step and have the child independently close the button.

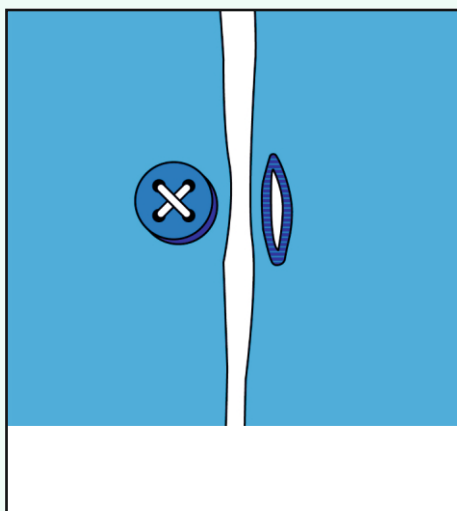
Similarly teach the child to open buttons.

Things to Keep in Mind

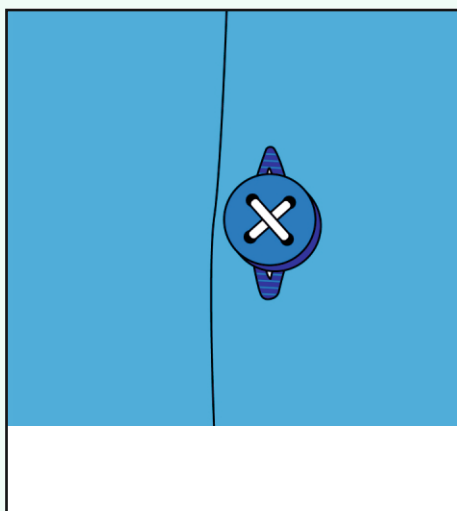
-  Begin with large buttons and larger button holes and gradually move to smaller ones.
-  Start with only one or two buttons that the child has to manipulate. Depending on the child's pace, gradually increase the number of buttons.
-  When practicing taking off or wearing clothes, get the child to open or close only the last button. Gradually increase the number.
-  When the child begins to close several buttons, close the first button to position clothes appropriately. This is especially useful when wearing clothes like shirts and jackets.
-  To strengthen the concept of privacy, practice the skill in a room when wearing or taking off clothes.
-  This is an especially complicated skill and if the child finds it hard to button, use garments and accessories with other kinds of fasteners or adapt clothes as described earlier.

BUTTONS

Buttons Open



Buttons Close






BUCKLES

BUCKLES are found on most bags, clothes, footwear, belts, and other accessories in everyday life. Buckle style fasteners can be complicated for children and may be introduced when the child has the necessary motor skills and eye hand coordination required to carry out the action.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Lap board with buckles
- ✓ Everyday use items with buckles of different styles and sizes (e.g. belts, footwear, bags)



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualised to child's skill set and family environment:

Unbuckle

- ✓ Unbuckle on a lap board
- ✓ Practice with a variety of items from child's everyday life such as bags, belts, and shoes (off body)
- ✓ Practice unbuckling belts, shoes etc. when the child has them on



Buckle

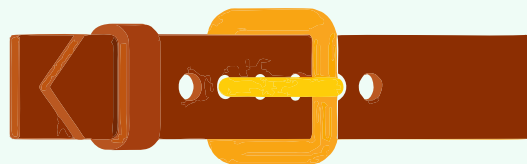
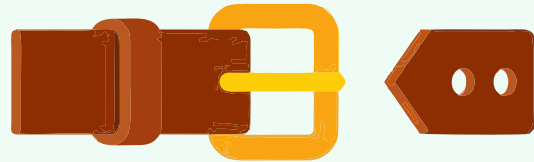
- ✓ Buckle on a lap board
- ✓ Practice with a variety of items from child's everyday life such as bags, belts, and shoes (off body)
- ✓ Practice buckling belts, shoes etc. when the child has them on



Suggested Words to Use

Unbuckle

1. Hold
2. Pull out strap
3. Move pin
4. Open



Buckle

1. Hold strap
2. Put in (tip of strap through buckle)
3. Pull strap (through buckle)
4. Put pin (in the hole)
5. Push strap (through the buckle)
6. Pull strap (straighten strap after buckling)

Teaching the Sequence

- Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
- Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.

Things to Keep in Mind

- Begin with large-sized, easy to use buckles.




- Start with only one buckle that the child has to manipulate. Depending on the child's pace, practice with more buckles at each step.



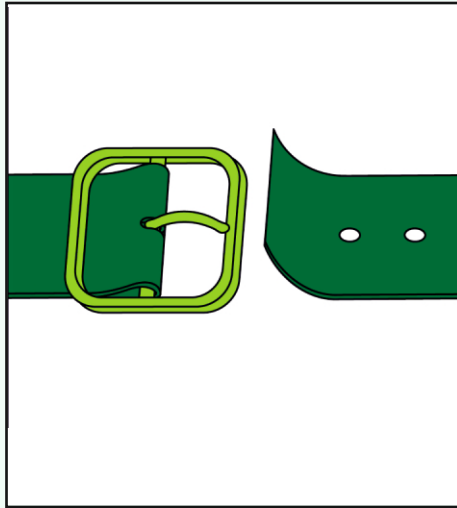
- Some children find it easier to sit on the floor or sit on a chair and keep foot on stool while wearing shoes or sandals.

BUCKLES

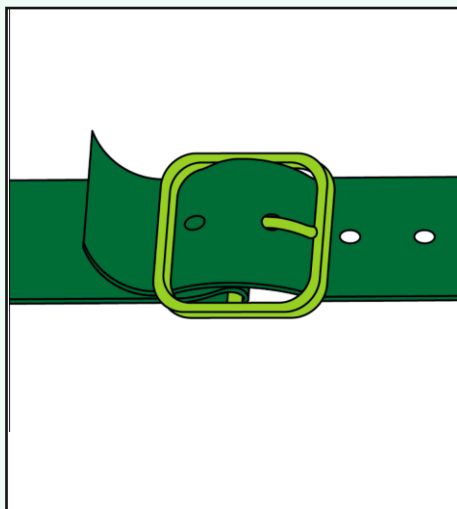
-  This is an especially complicated skill and if the child finds it difficult to manipulate buckles, use garments and accessories with different kinds of fasteners or adapt clothes as described earlier.

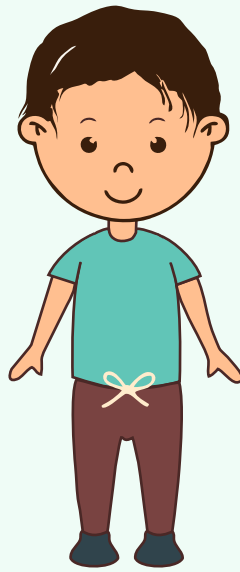
BUCKLES

Buckle Open



Buckle Close






STRING FASTENERS

THOUGH SEEN in tops, dresses, sweat shirts, and other garments and accessories, string style fasteners are commonly used in shoe laces and drawstrings in pyjamas and track pants. One of the most complicated fasteners for children, this is best introduced with an older child who has the necessary motor skills and eye hand coordination required to carry out the action.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ Lap board with strings
- ✓ Clothes, shoes, and other articles (from everyday use) with string fasteners



Suggested Sequence to Teach

The following sequence may be individualized to child's skill set and family environment:

Open a knot

- ✓ Open knotted string fasteners on a lap board
- ✓ Practice opening knotted string fasteners on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes and shoes (off body)
- ✓ Practice opening knotted string fasteners on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes and shoes when the child has the clothes and shoes on



Tie a knot

- ✓ Tie a knot with string fasteners on a lap board
- ✓ Practice tying string fasteners on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes and shoes (off body)
- ✓ Practice tying string fasteners on a variety of items from child's everyday life including clothes and shoes when the child has the clothes and shoes

Suggested Words to Use



Open a Knot

1. Pull (one end of the string)
2. Open (the knot)



Tie a Knot

1. Hold (edge of one string in one hand)
2. Hold (edge of the other string in other hand)
3. Knot strings (to knot)
4. Pull (to tighten the knot)
5. Make a right loop
6. Make a left loop
7. Wrap (right loop around left loop)
8. Knot loops
9. Pull (to tighten the knot)

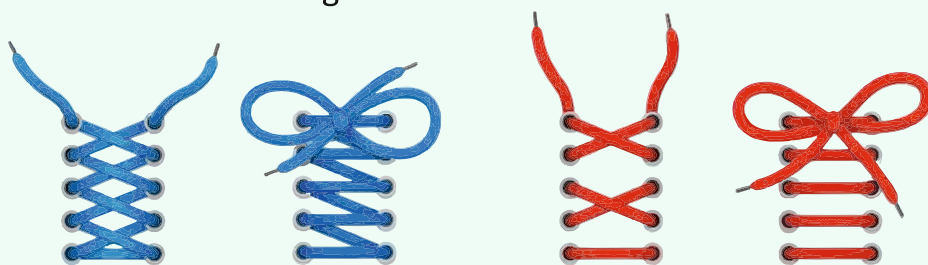


Teaching the Sequence

- Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
- Follow the child's pace. In the beginning, provide the necessary support the child requires to complete each step and then reduce it gradually.



Things to Keep in Mind

- Begin teaching with strings of two different colours. This can provide visual clarity in learning to tie a knot.
- Have a clear indicator (e.g. a large mark with a coloured pen) on the strings to enable the child to estimate where to hold or loop the string.
- There are several styles of tying a knot. The adult may decide based on the child's strength.

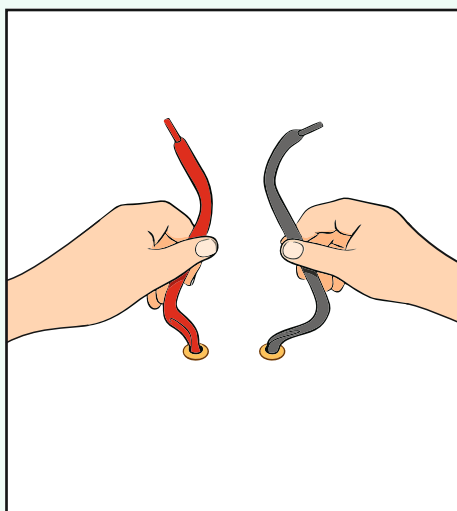


- There are songs around tying shoelaces that may make this process fun.

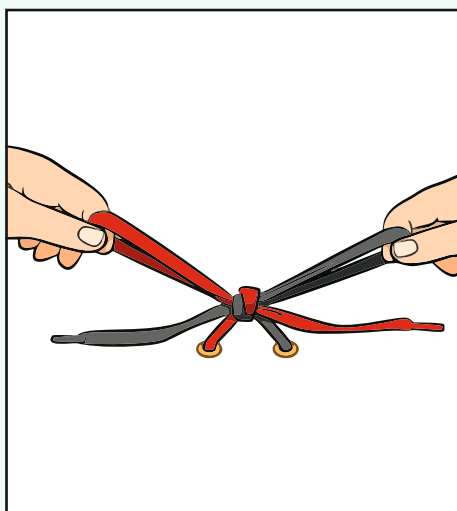
STRING FASTENERS

-  To strengthen the concept of privacy, practice the skill in a room when wearing or taking off clothes.
-  This is an especially complicated skill and if the child finds it difficult to manipulate shoe laces or drawstrings on pyjamas, use garments and accessories with other kinds of fasteners or adapt clothes as described earlier.

Open Knot

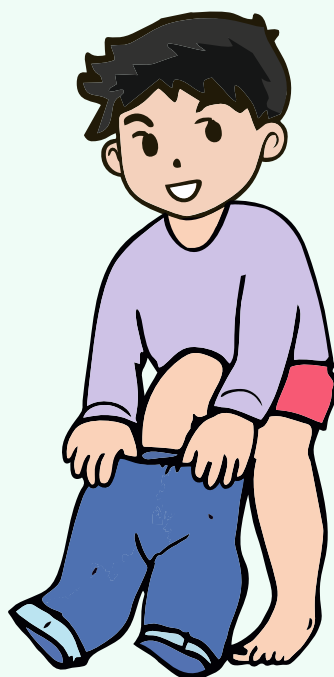


Tie Knot






CLOTHES



LOWER GARMENTS

BEING ABLE TO take off and wear lower garments is a necessary skill for the child to be independent in his or her toileting, bathing, and dressing routines. An important aspect of this skill is for the child to learn to take off and wear a range of lower garments of different lengths and fits such as underpants, shorts, pants, pyjamas, and jeans.

Getting Started

 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ A range of child's daily use garments such as underpants, shorts, pyjamas, pants, and jeans

Suggested Sequence to Teach

Take off garment

Wear garment

Suggested Words to Use




Take Off Garment

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (with both hands)
3. Pull down
4. Take out leg
5. Take out other leg

Wear Garment

1. Hold (so that front of the garment faces away from body)
2. Put in leg
3. Put in other leg
4. Pull up
5. Stand (if in sitting position)
6. Pull up
7. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)

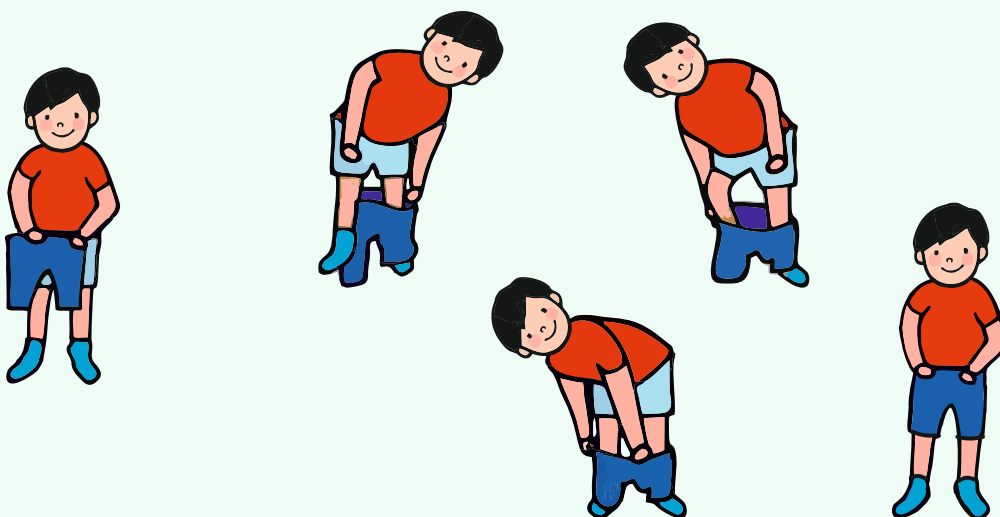
Teaching the Sequence

-  Focus on teaching one skill at a time. Till such time as the child is independent, provide the support that the child requires to open and/or close fasteners such as zippers, buttons, drawstrings in pyjamas etc. Although part of the sequence, teach them as separate activities.
-  Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described earlier. For instance, to teach wearing shorts with an elastic band:
-  Support the child through all the steps except the last one. Focus on teaching the child to independently carry out the last step: pulling up the pants. Begin teaching this step by providing the support the child requires and gradually fade away support in the following sequence:
 - ✓ Adult assists the child to pull up shorts till hips and gradually reduce support as the child pulls up the rest.
 - ✓ Adult assists the child to pull up shorts till thighs and gradually reduce support as the child pulls up the rest.
 - ✓ Adult assists the child to pull up shorts till knees and gradually reduce support as the child pulls up the rest.






- 👤 When the child independently pulls up the shorts, focus on achieving independence in the step before i.e. put right leg in the shorts. Support the child when the child is putting the left leg in the shorts. Gradually reduce the support so the child is able to independently put in the right leg. At all times, have the child pull up the shorts.
- 👤 When the child independently puts in the right leg and pulls up the shorts, focus on achieving independence in the step before i.e. putting the left leg in the shorts. Gradually reduce support so the child is able to independently put in the left leg. At all times, have the child put the right leg in and then pull up the shorts.

Similarly teach to take off shorts and other garments so that the child can independently take off and wear lower garments.

- 👤 The level of support that a child requires may vary at each step and the child may become independent in some steps sooner than the others.

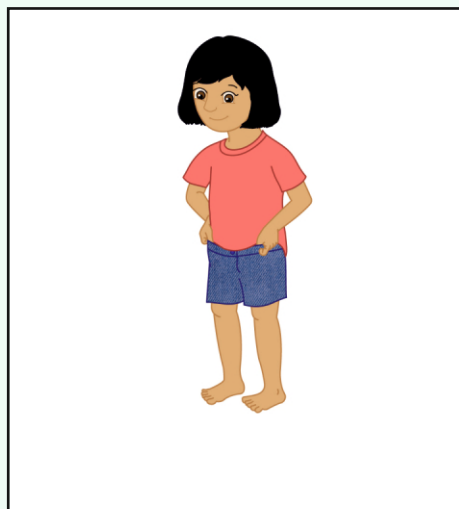
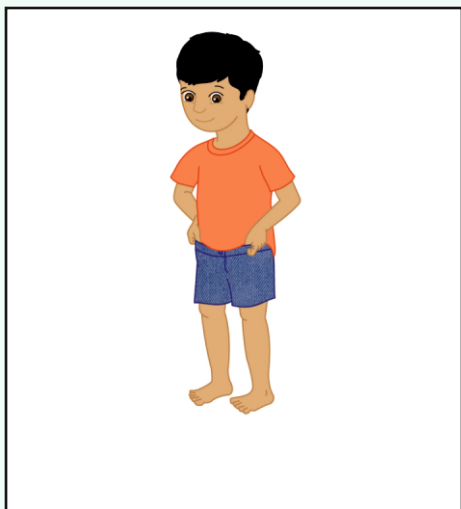


Things to Keep in Mind

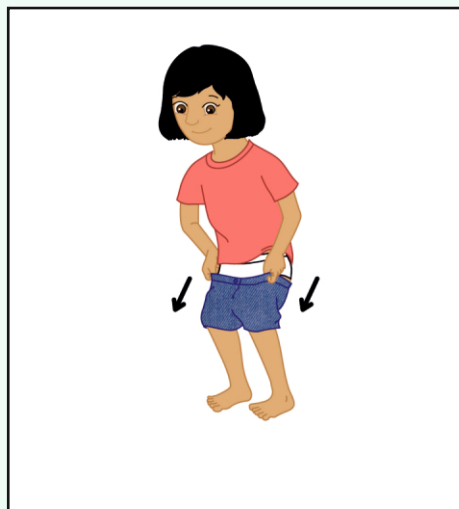
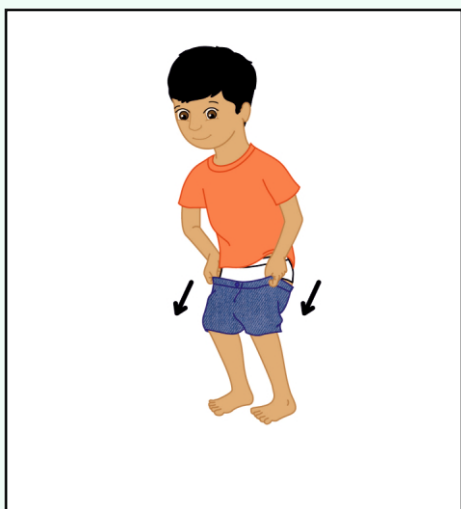
-  Use the same sequence and instructions for all similar garments such as underpants, shorts, pyjamas, track pants, trousers, jeans etc.
-  Start with underpants, shorts, and loose fit clothes with elastic waistbands that a child will be able to take off / wear easily before moving to garments that are tight such as pyjamas, jeans etc. or with fasteners such as buttons and zippers. Suggestions to adapt clothes have been discussed in the introduction to this module.
-  In the beginning when required (such as when wearing pants or pyjamas), scrunch up the garment so that the leg opening is close to foot. This makes it easier for the child. Once the child has practiced enough, it will be easier for the child to slide in leg without the scrunch. Once the child is independent in other aspects, you can teach the child to scrunch up the garment. Scrunching up can also be practiced when wearing socks, or long-sleeved garments.
-  Some children may prefer to sit when wearing pants. Depending on the child's balance, children maybe taught to lean back against wall, door, or the sink for support.
-  Practice the skill in a room or bathroom to strengthen the concept of privacy.

LOWER GARMENTS: TAKE OFF

Hold

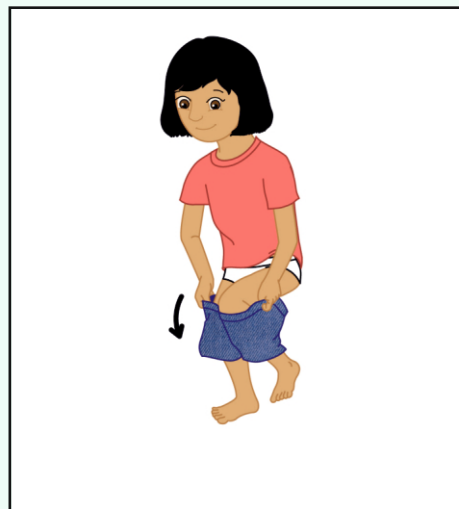


Pull Down

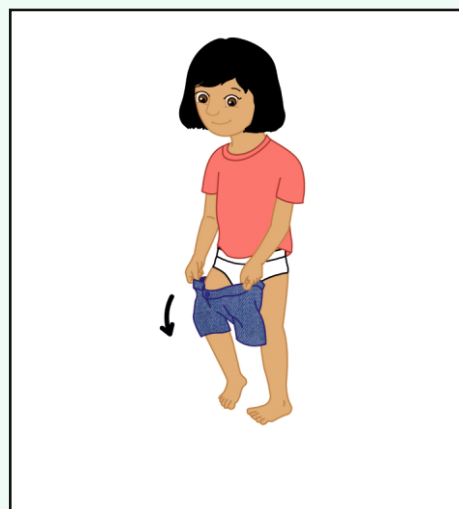
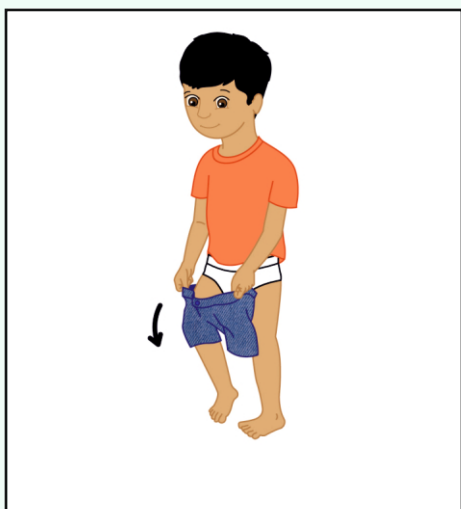


LOWER GARMENTS: TAKE OFF

Take Out Leg

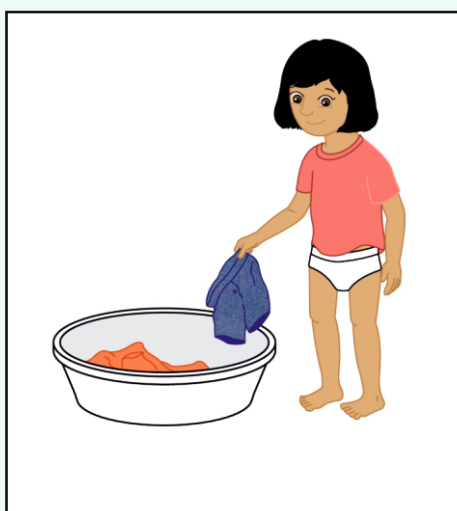
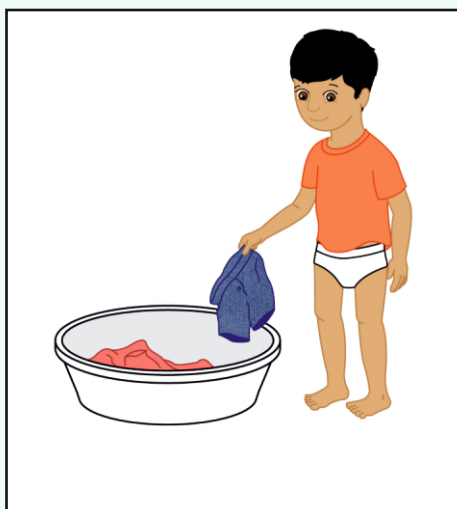


Take Out Other Leg



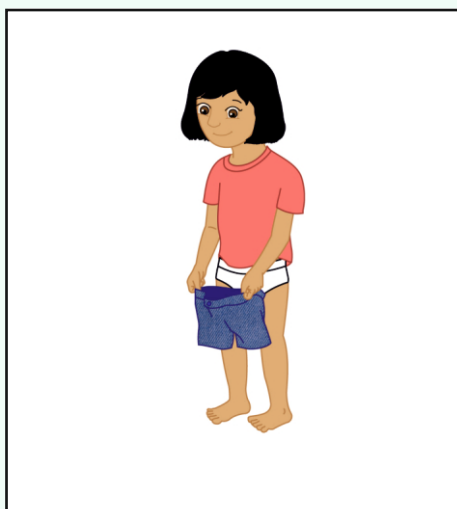
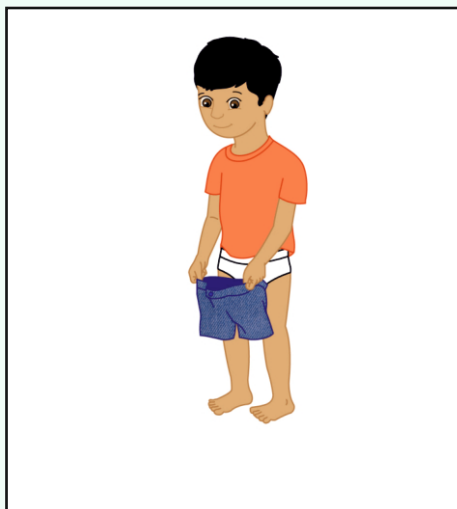
LOWER GARMENTS: TAKE OFF

Put in Basket



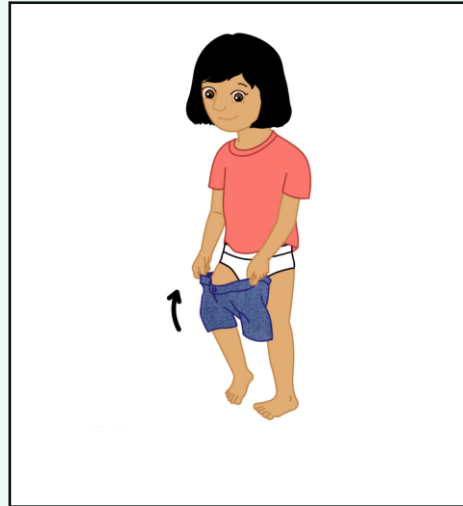
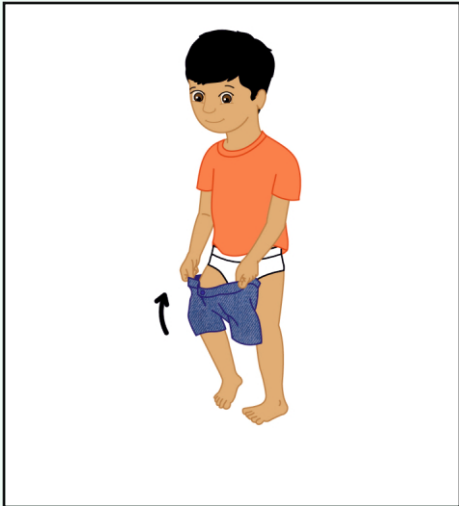
LOWER GARMENTS: WEAR

Hold

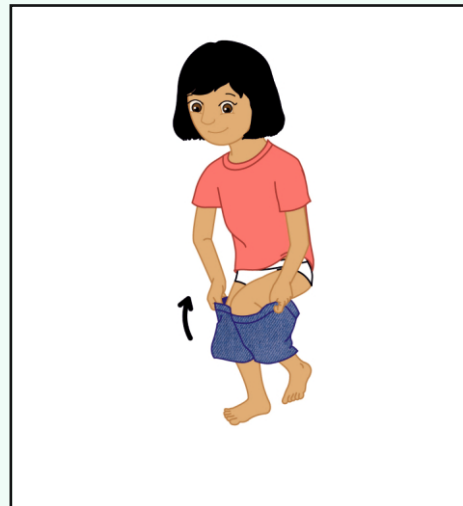
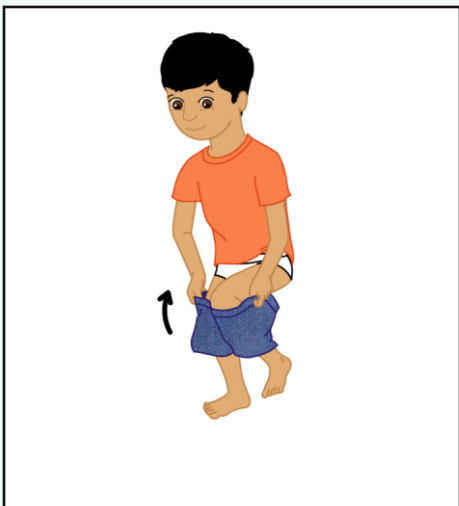


LOWER GARMENTS: WEAR

Put in Leg

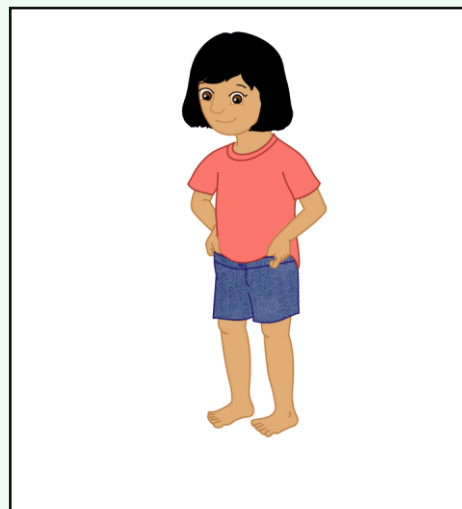
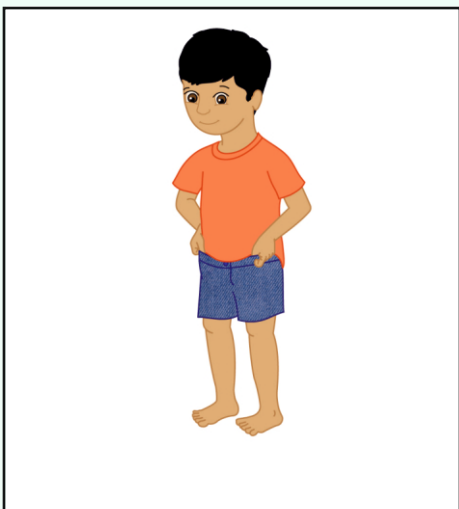
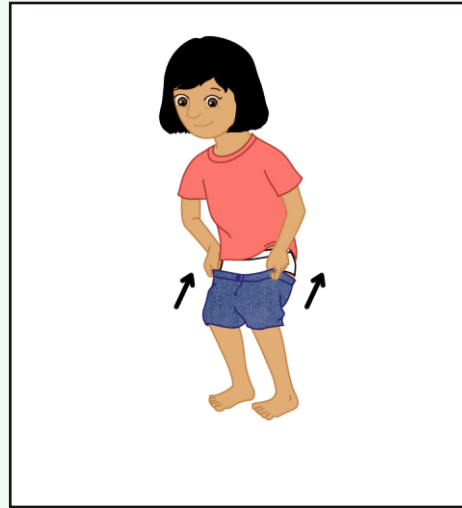
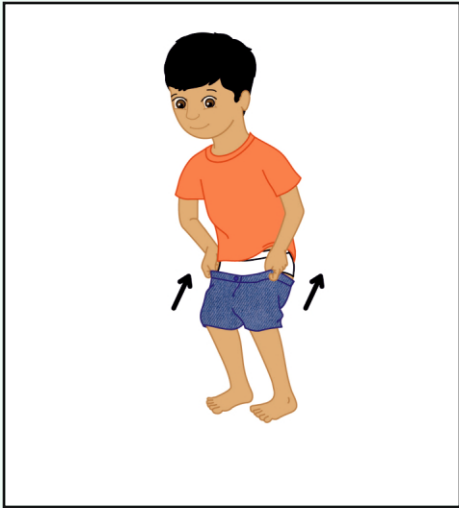


Put in Other Leg

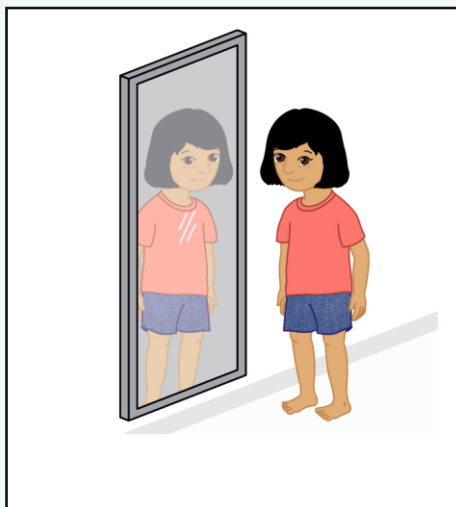
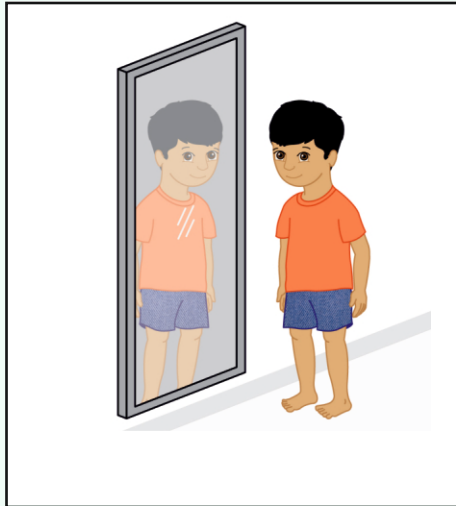


LOWER GARMENTS: WEAR

Pull Up



Look in Mirror






UPPER GARMENTS—FRONT CLOSED



SOME GARMENTS such as t-shirts, frocks, kurtas etc. are fully or partially closed from the front. They need to be slipped into or taken off over the head when dressing or undressing. Although a complex action, for many children this action is relatively easier than to manipulate fasteners. This is a necessary skill for all children and may be introduced with younger children as well.

There are many different ways to take off and wear a garment that is closed from the front. For instance, when wearing a garment, some people start by slipping in their arms, while others prefer to first wear the garment over their head. We suggest a few commonly used ways that can facilitate independence. These may be adapted to the child's skills and environment.

Getting Started

-  Ensure everything you need is in place:
 - ✓ A range of child's daily use garments that are closed from the front such as vests, t-shirts, frocks, kurtas etc.

Suggested Sequence to Teach

-  Take off garment
-  Wear garment

Suggested Words to Use

-  *Take Off Garment*

Based on the child's strengths and garments, use any of the following options:

Option 1

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (cross arms and hold bottom seam of the garment with each hand)
3. Pull up
4. Take out arm
5. Pull out

UPPER GARMENTS—FRONT CLOSED

Option 2

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (hold bottom seam of the garment with each hand)
3. Pull up
4. Take out arm
5. Take out other arm
6. Hold (neck with both hands)
7. Pull out



Option 3

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (cross arms and hold bottom seams of the garment with each hand)
3. Pull up
4. Pull over head

Wear Garment

Option 1



1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (from collar / neck, so that front faces away from body)
3. Put in head

4. Put in arm
5. Put in other arm
6. Pull down
7. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)

Option 2

1. Hold (so that front faces away from body)
2. Put in arm
3. Put in other arm
4. Hold (with both hands)
5. Put in head
6. Pull down
7. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)

Teaching the Sequence

-  Focus on teaching one skill at a time. Till such time as the child is independent, provide the necessary support to open and/or close fasteners such as zippers or buttons if any. Although part of the sequence, teach them as separate activities.
-  Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.

UPPER GARMENTS—FRONT CLOSED

- Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.

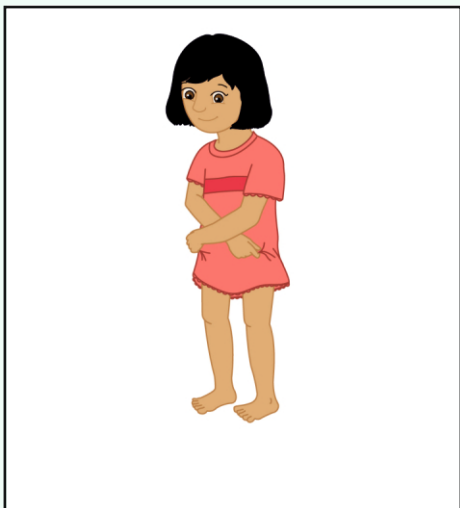
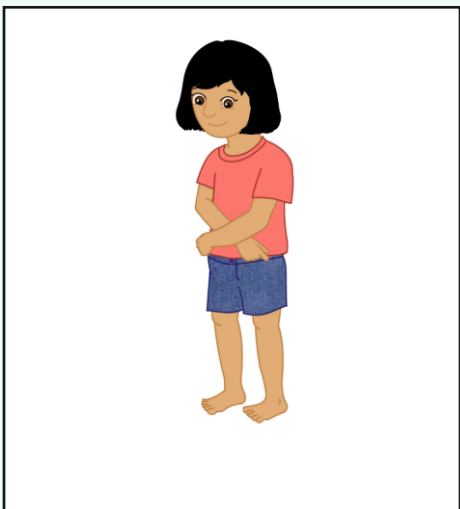
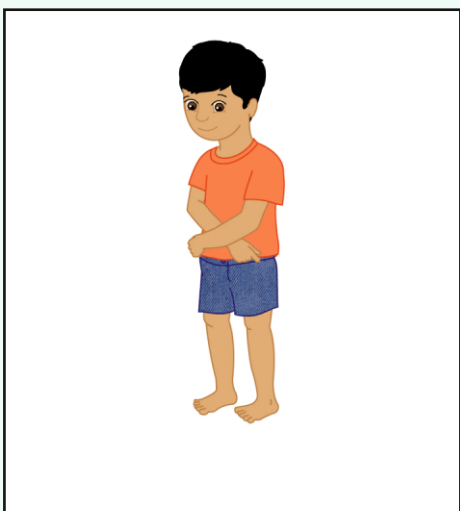
Things to Keep in Mind

- Use the same sequence and instructions for all garments that are closed from the front and need to be pulled over head to take off or remove. For instance, undershirts, t-shirts, kurtas, dresses or frocks, sweatshirts, sweaters etc.
- Start with simple clothes with short sleeves and loose fits such as undershirts that the child can adjust easily to.
- In the beginning when wearing garments with long sleeves such as t-shirts or sweaters, scrunch up the sleeve so that the arm and neck opening is close to the body. This makes it easier for the child to slide in the arm. Once the child has practiced enough, it will be easier for the child to slide in arm without the scrunch. Once the child is independent in other aspects, you can also teach the child to scrunch up the garment. Scrunching up can also be practiced when wearing socks, lowers etc.
- Practice the skill in a room or bathroom to strengthen the concept of privacy.

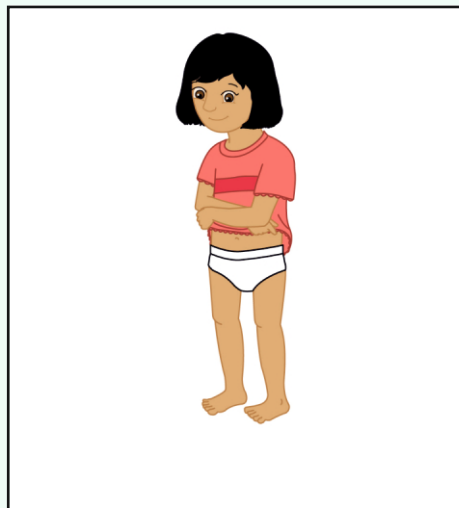
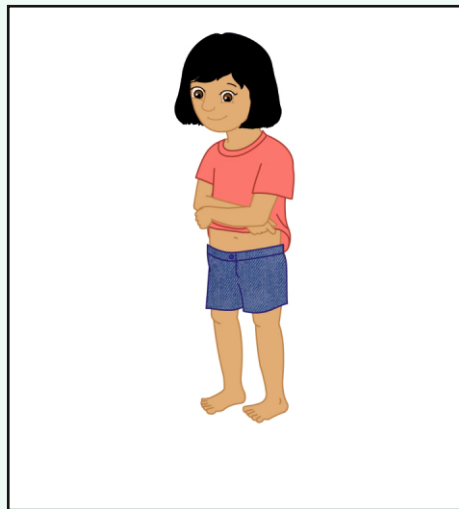
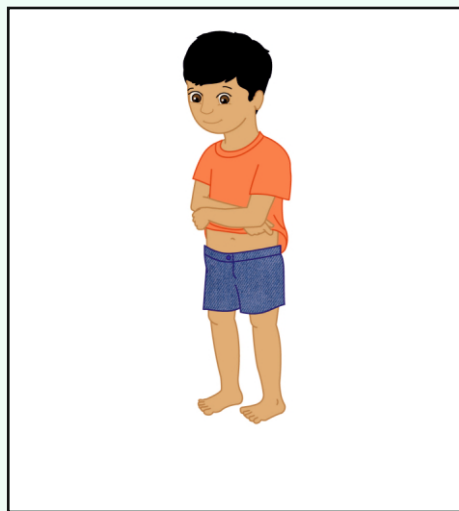


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION 1

Hold

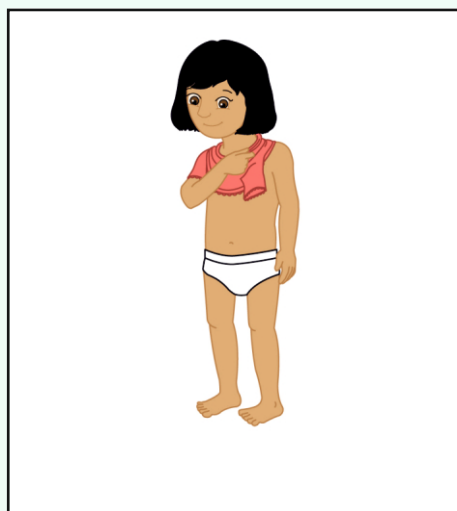
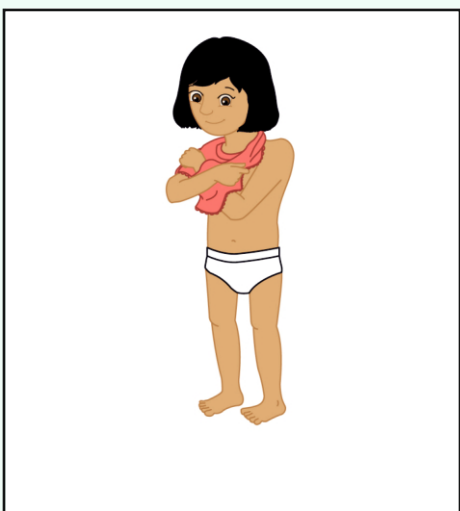
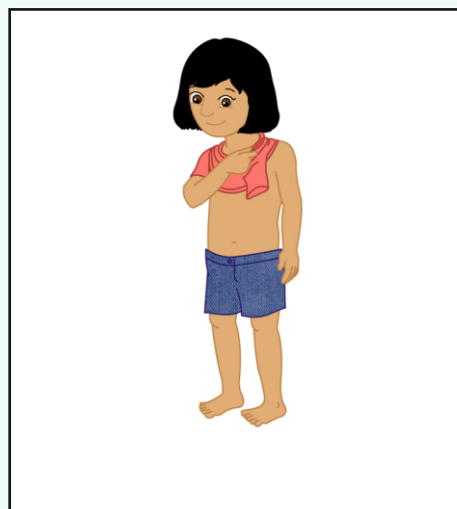
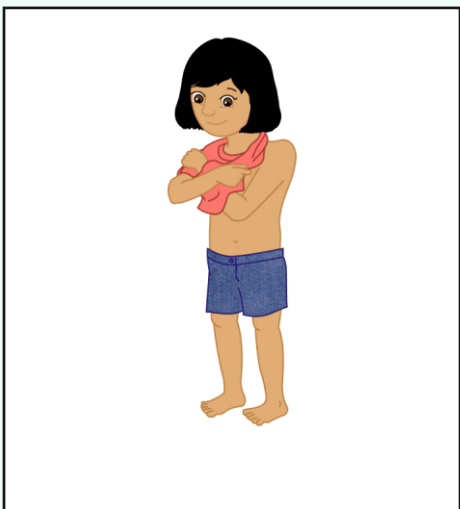
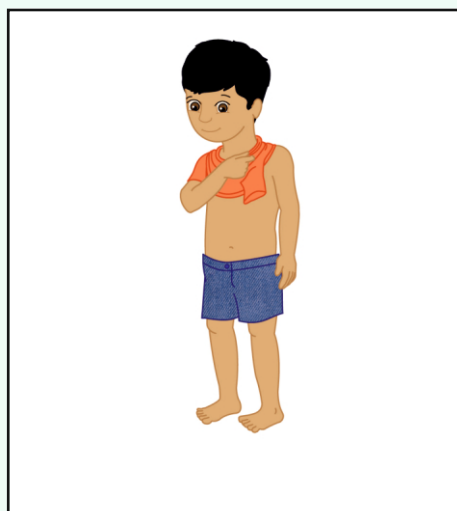
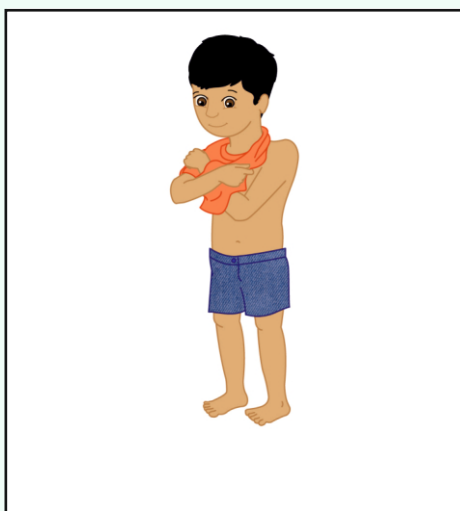


Pull Up



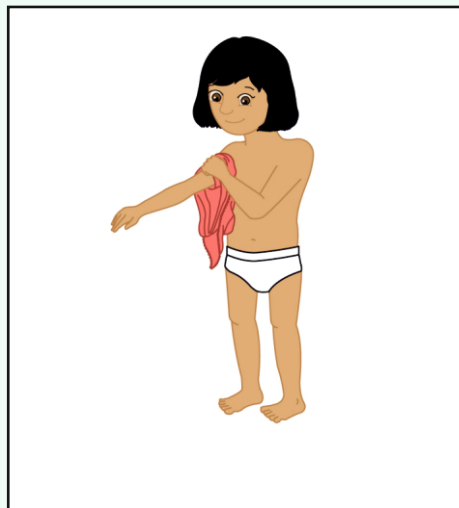
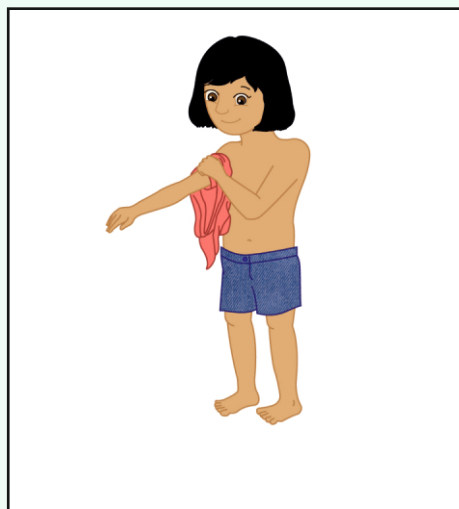
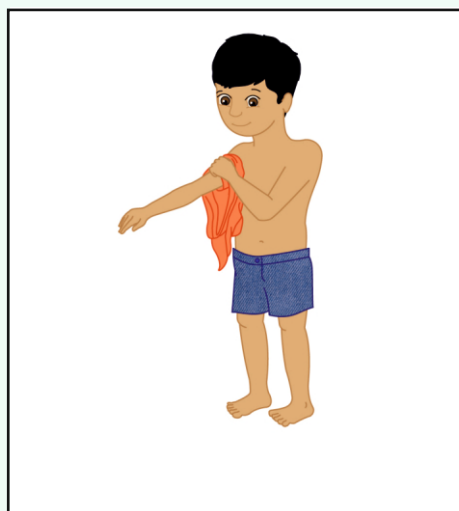
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION I

Take Out Arm

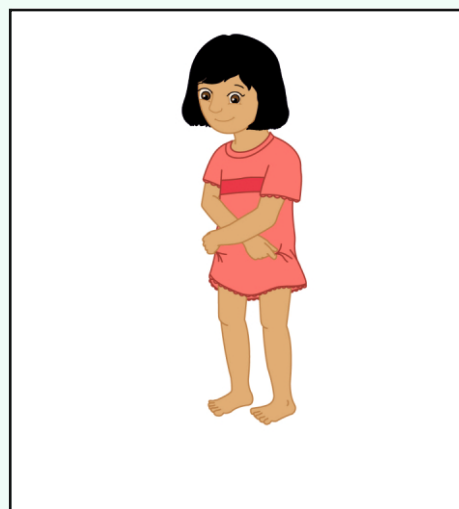
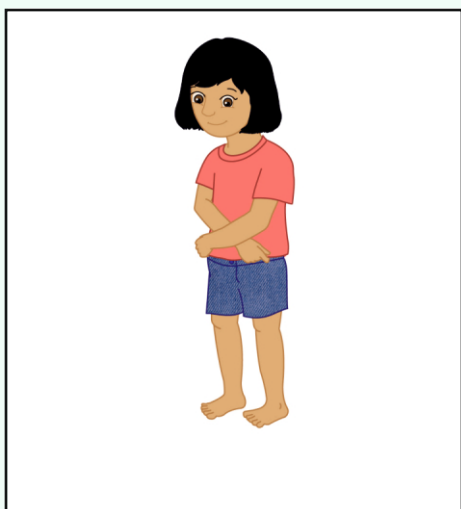
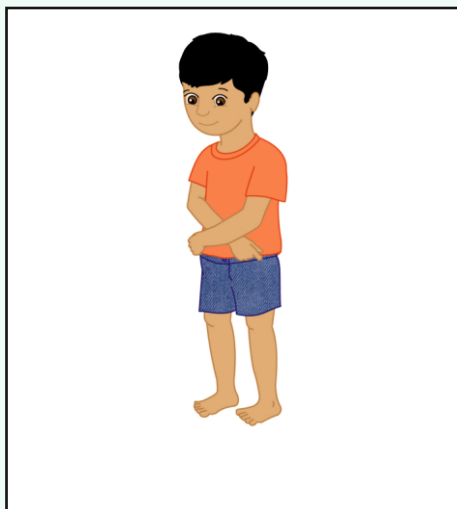


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION I

Pull Out

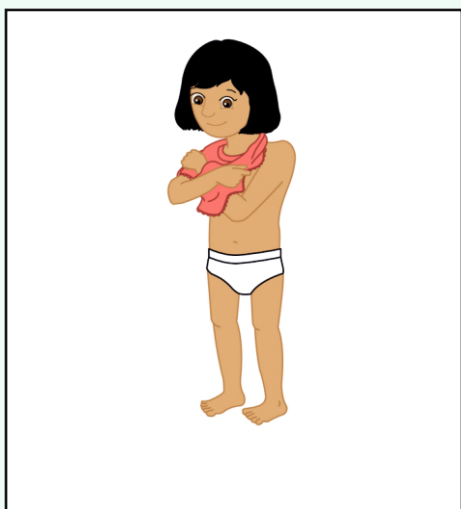
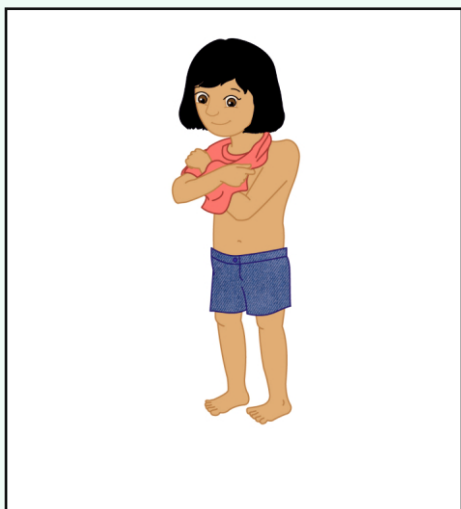
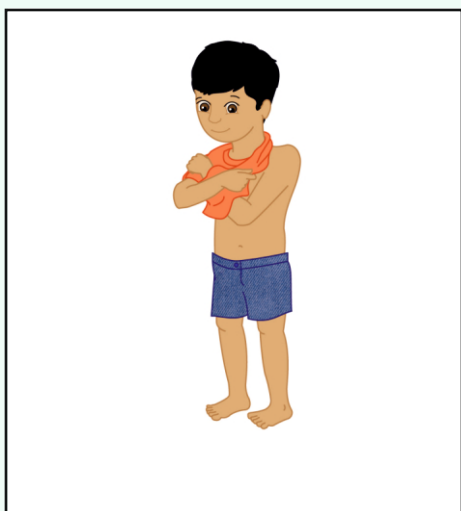


Hold

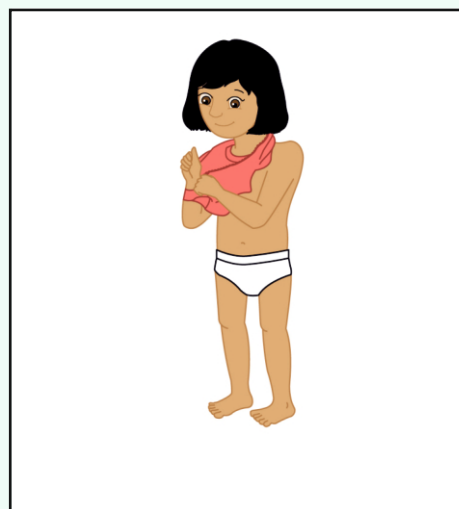
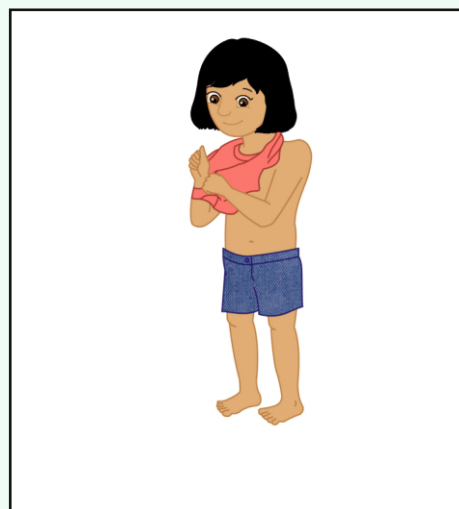
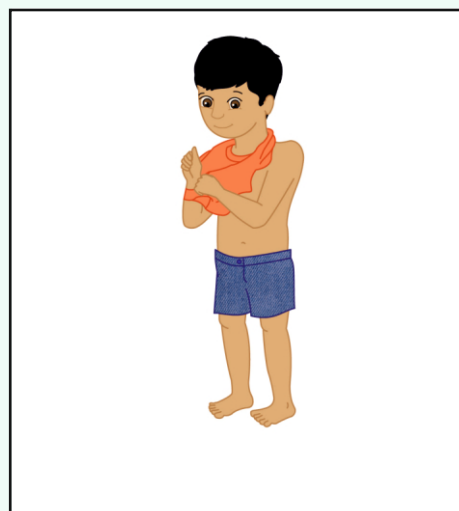


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION 2

Take Out Arm

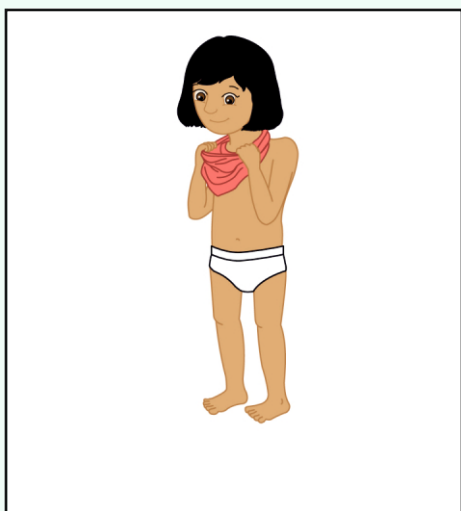
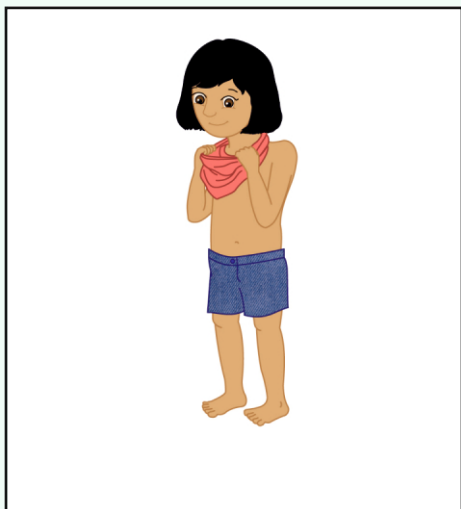
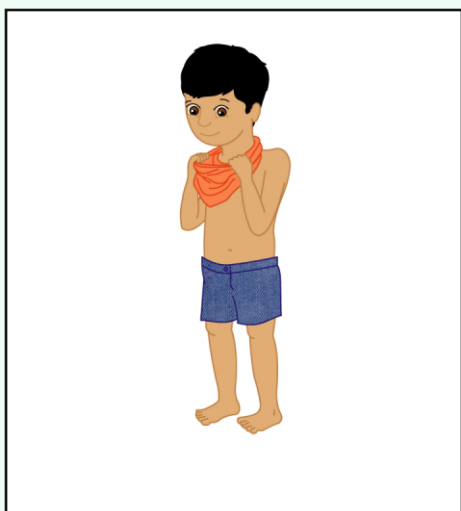


Take Out Other Arm

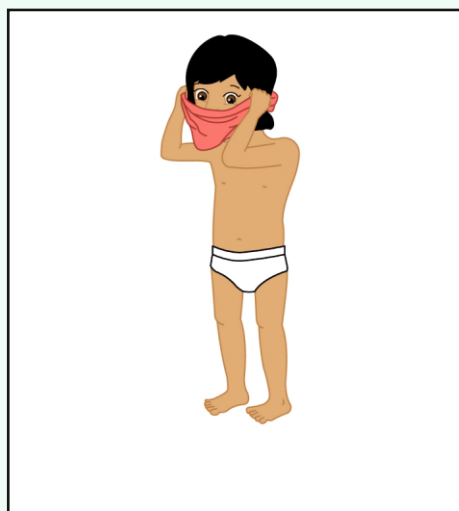
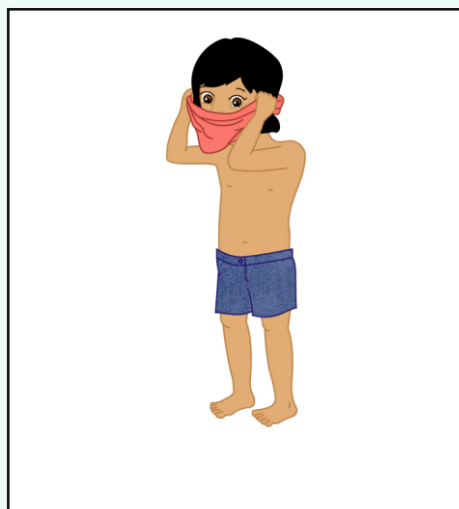
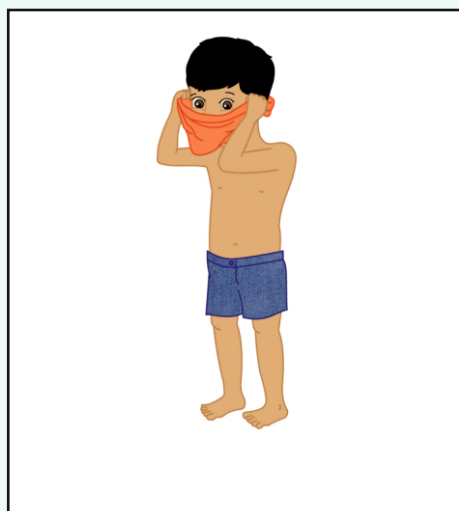


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION 2

Hold

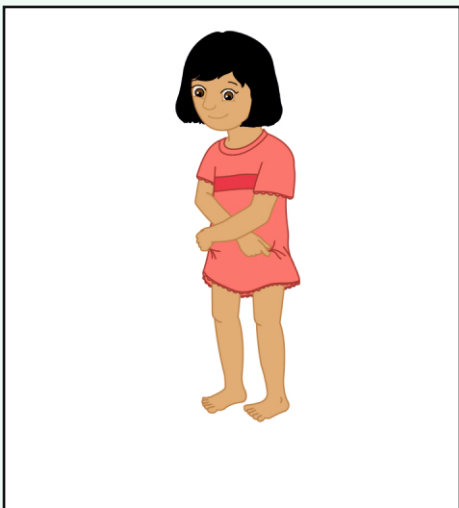
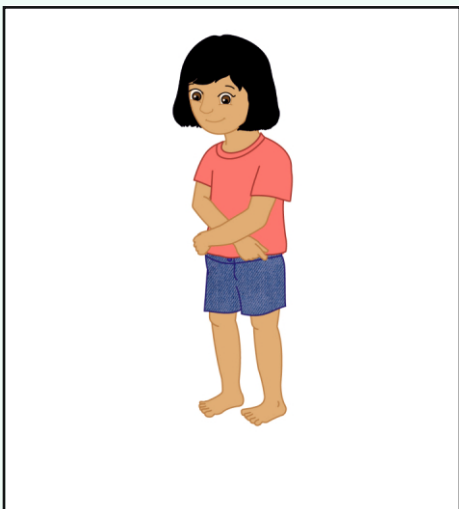
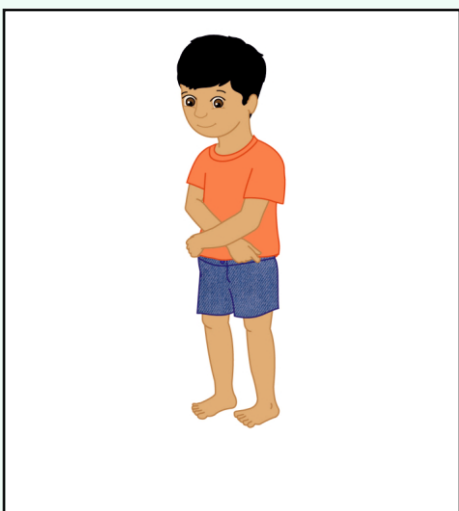


Pull Out

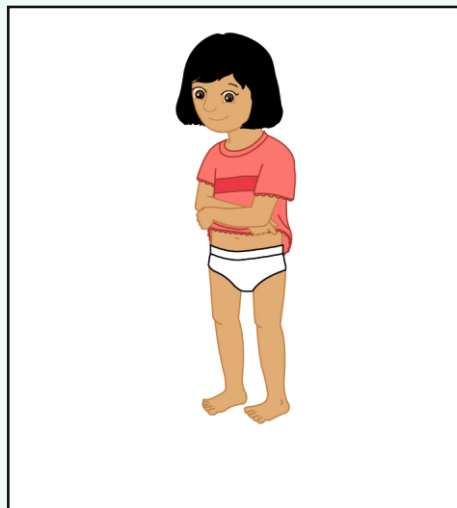
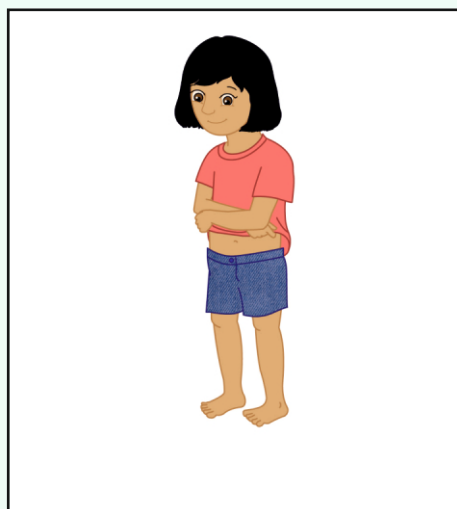
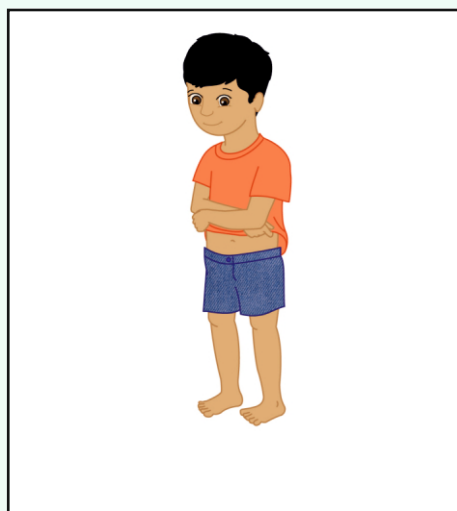


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION 3

Hold

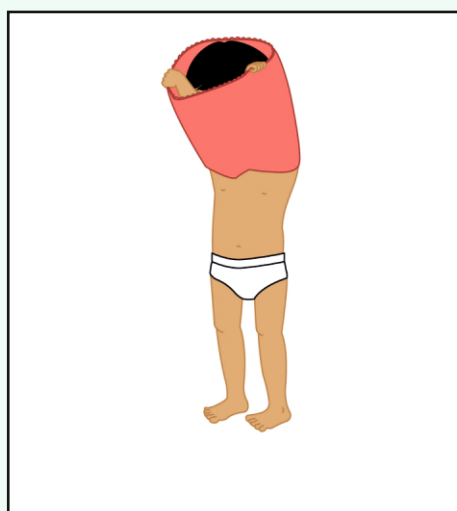
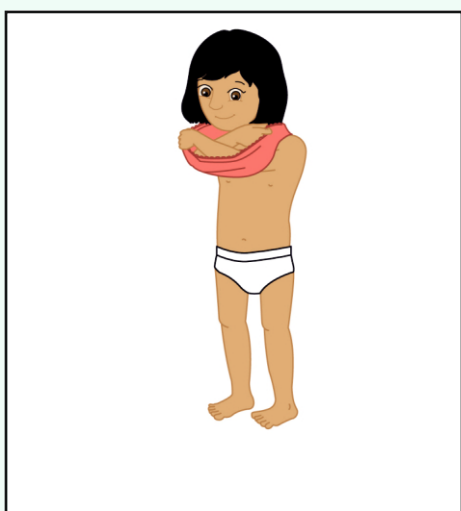
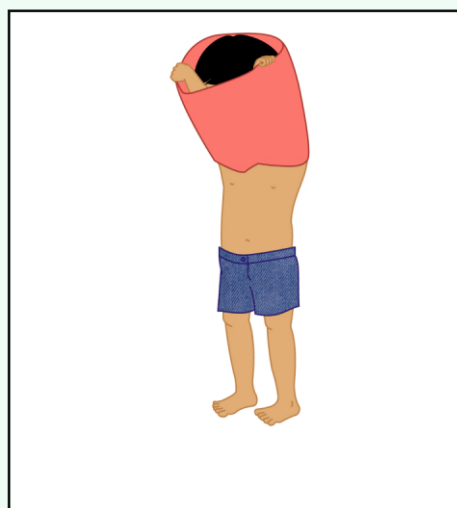
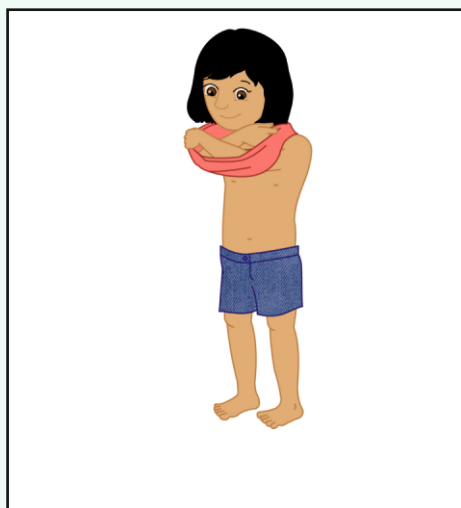
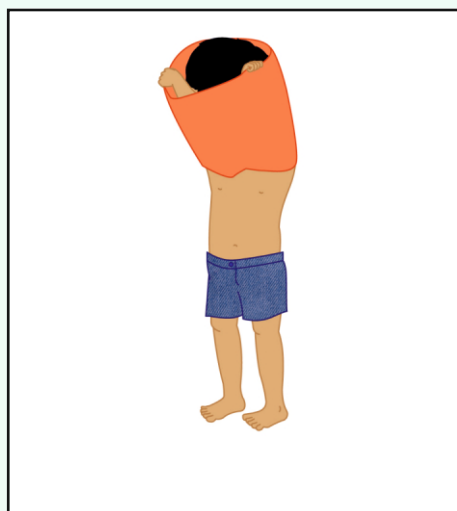


Pull Up

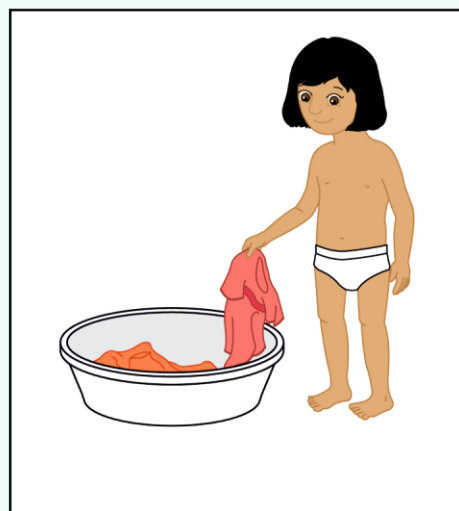
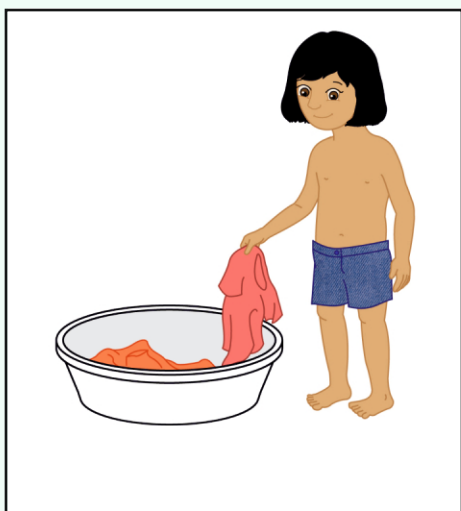
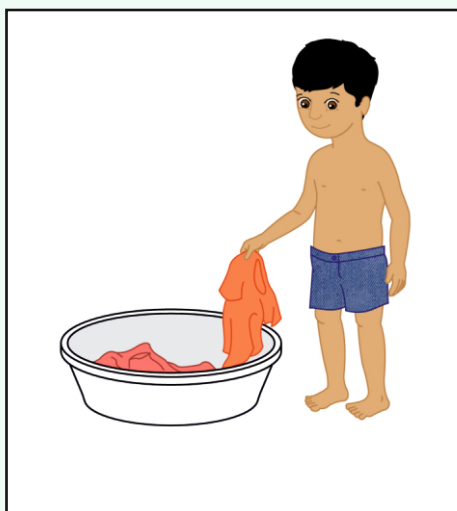


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: TAKE OFF – OPTION 3

Pull Over Head



Put in Basket

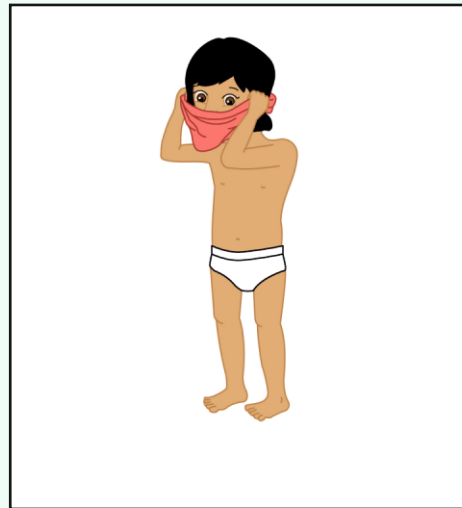
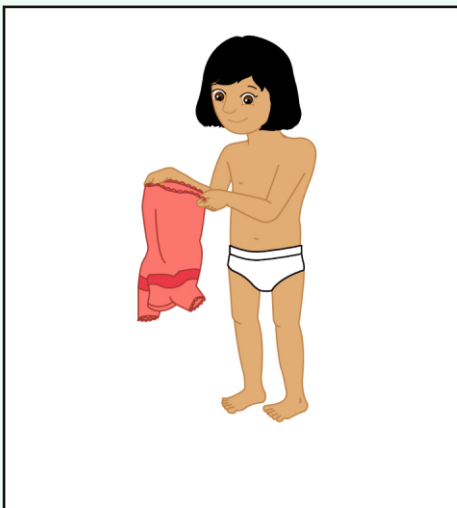
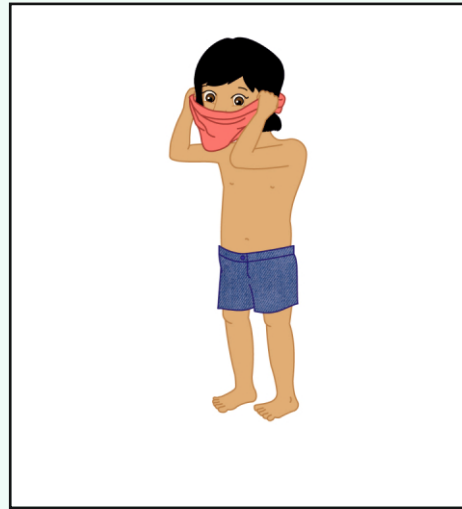
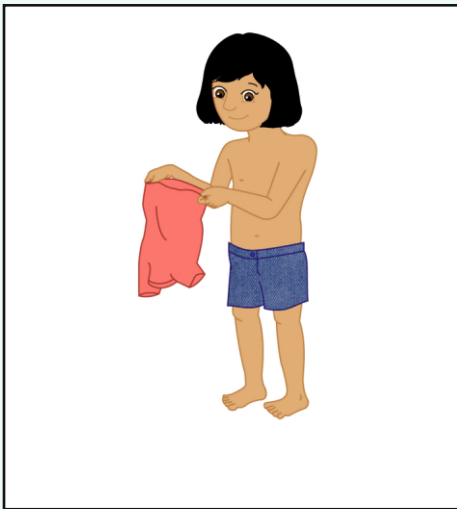
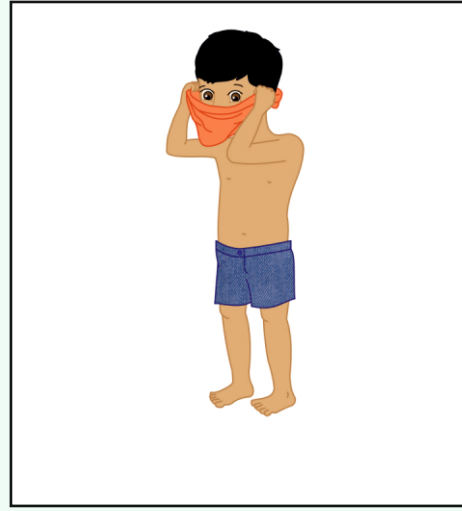


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION I

Hold

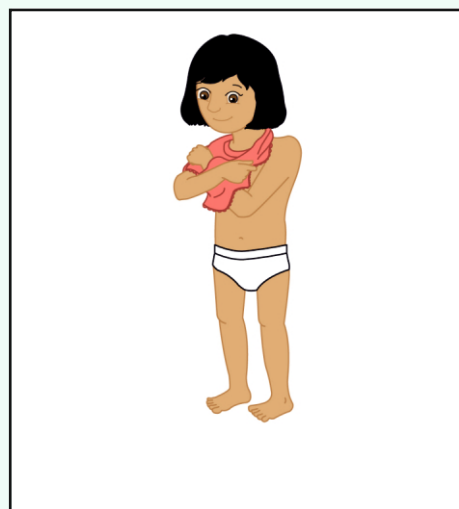
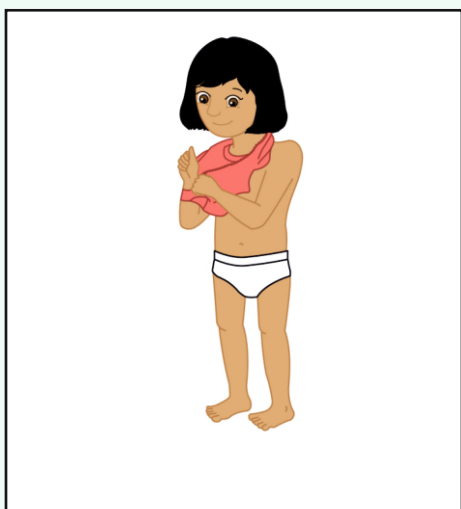
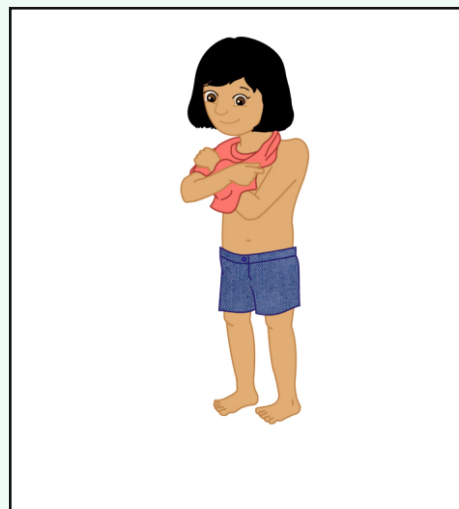
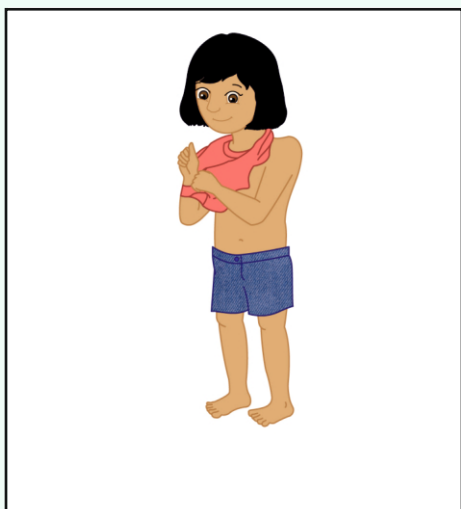
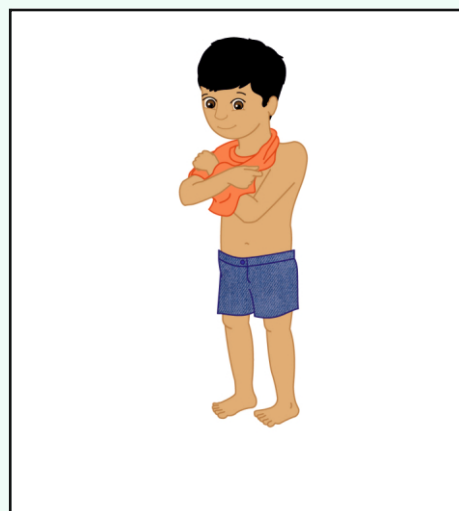


Put in Head



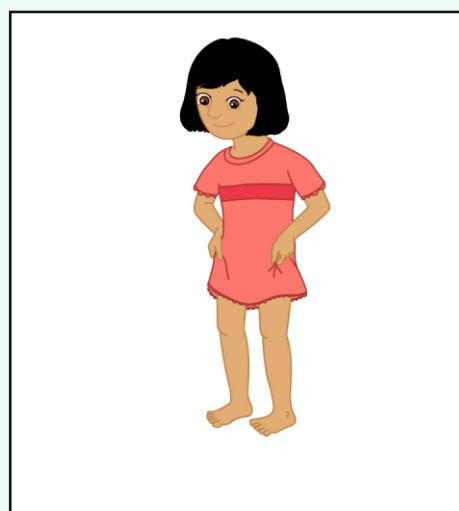
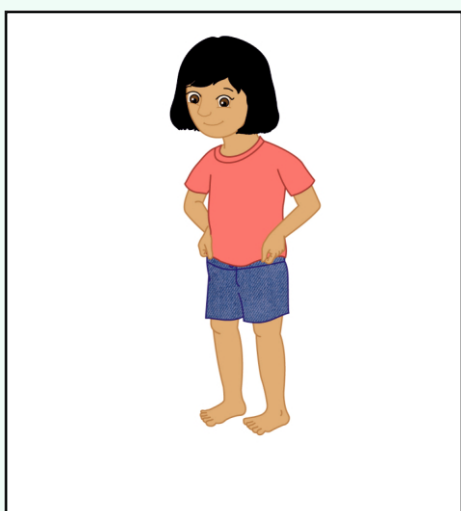
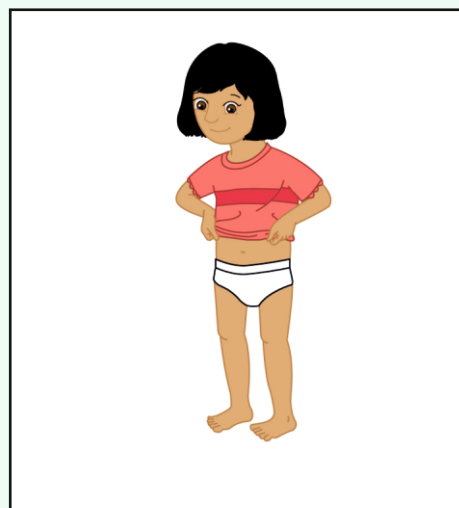
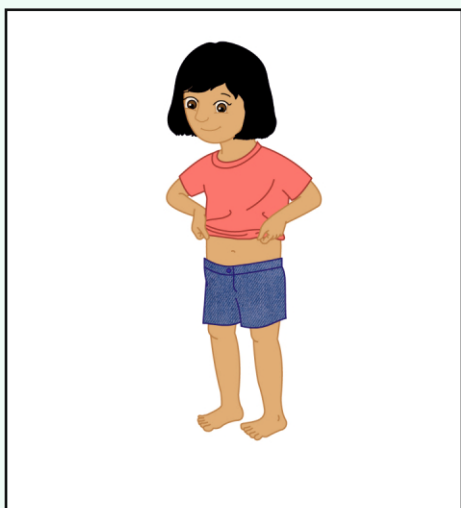
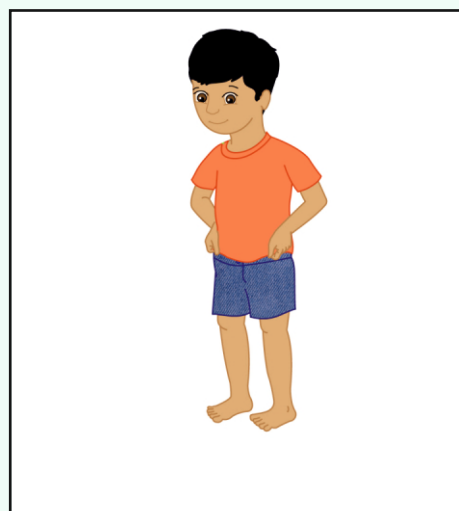
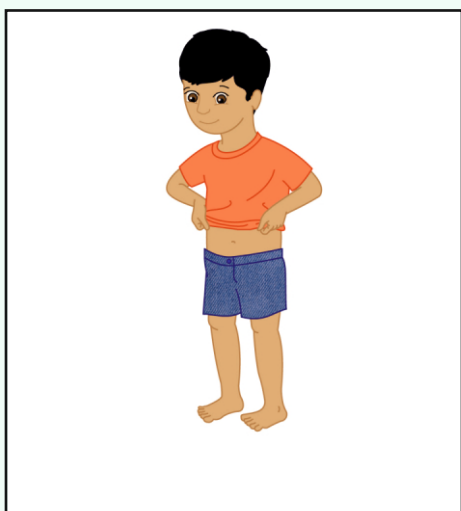
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION I

Put in Arm

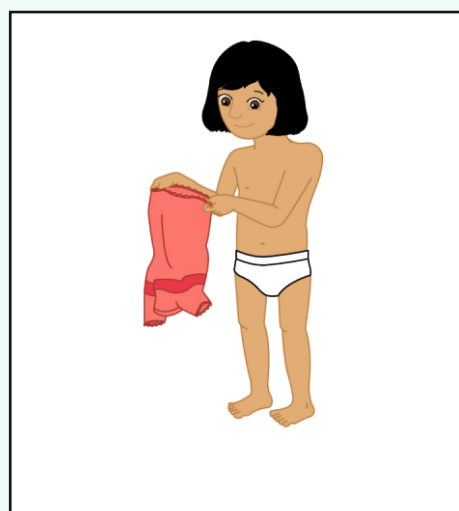


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION I

Pull Down

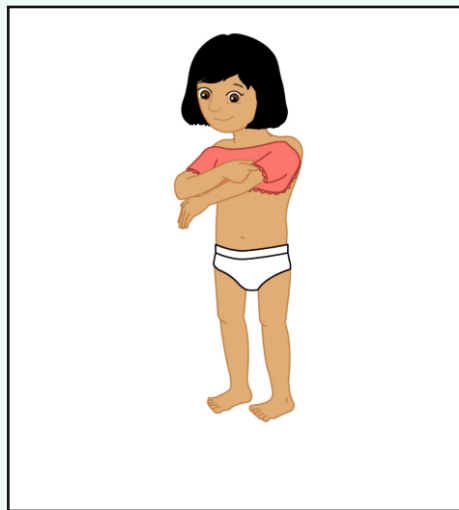
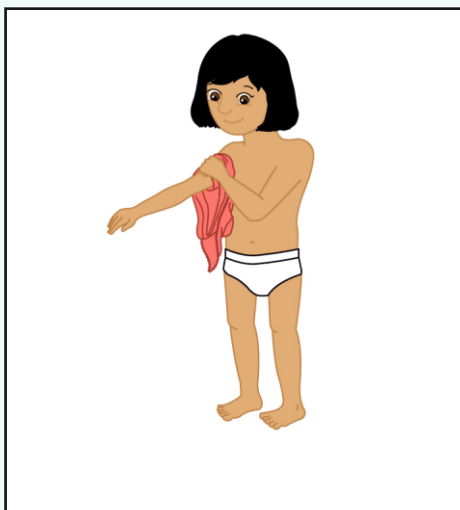
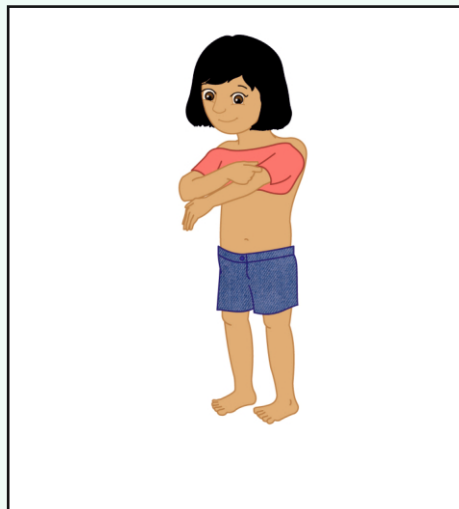
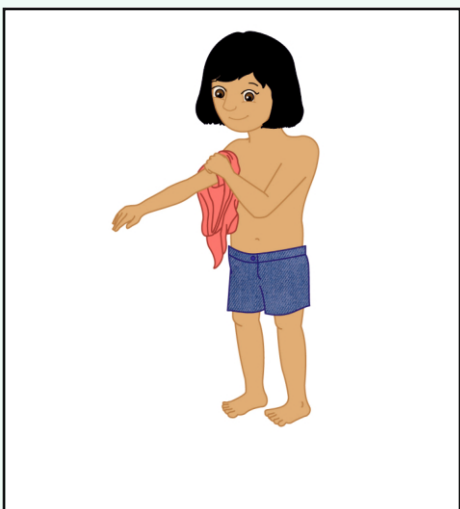
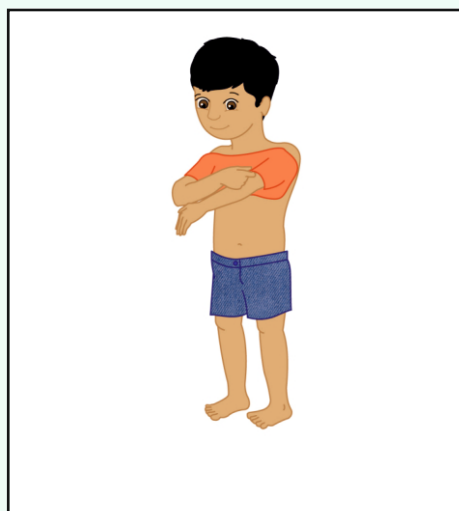
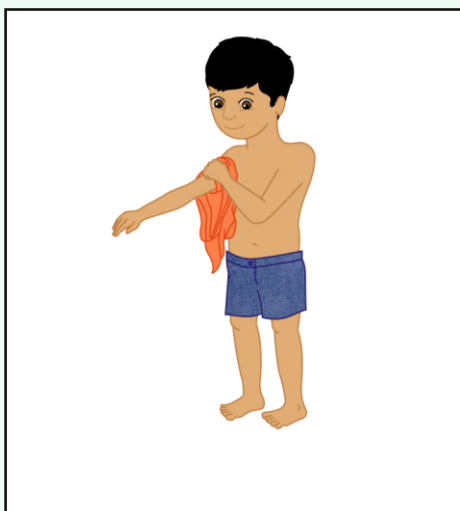


Hold



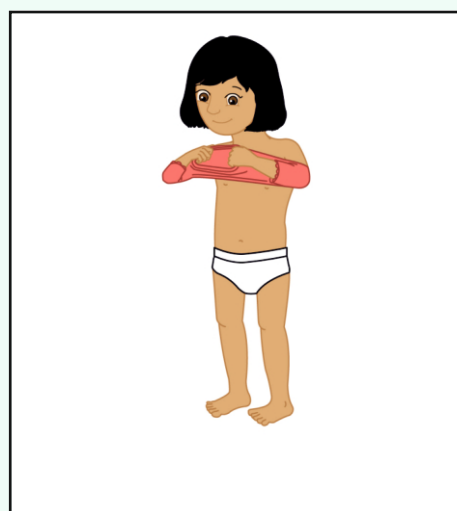
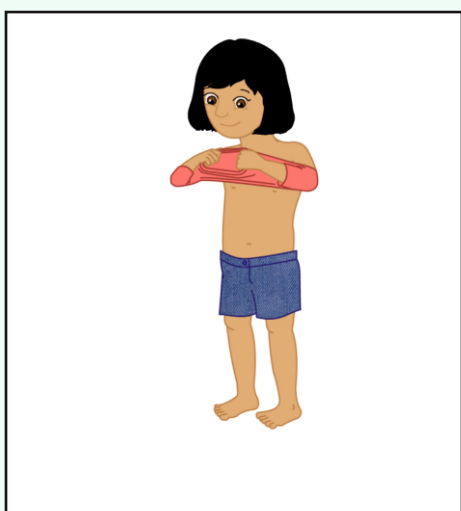
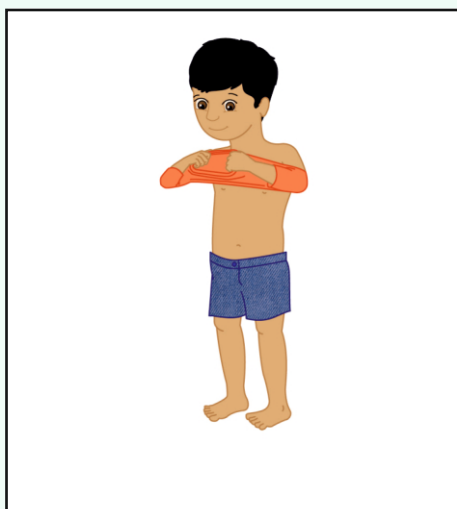
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION 2

Put in Arm



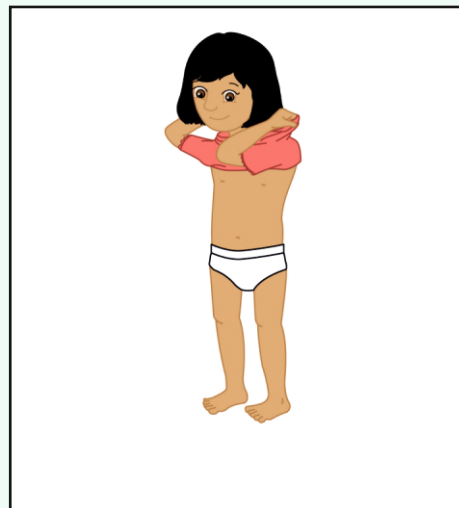
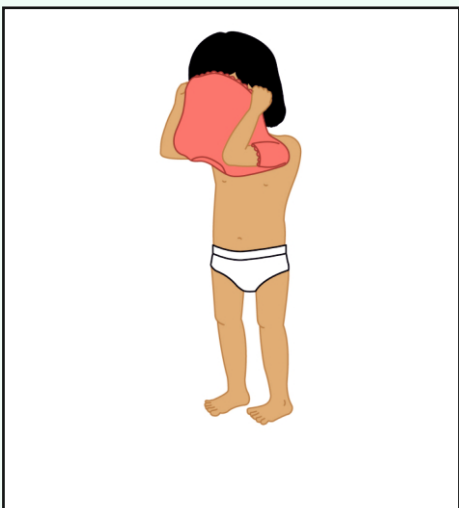
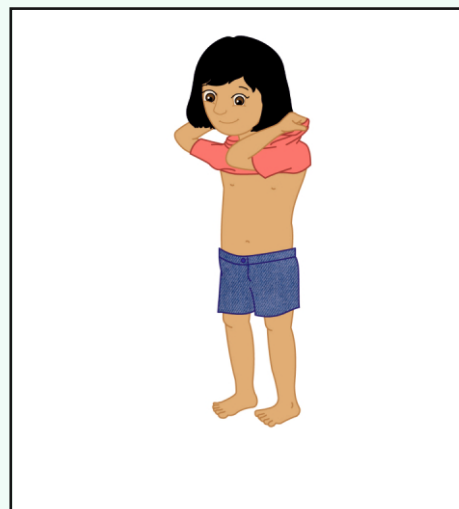
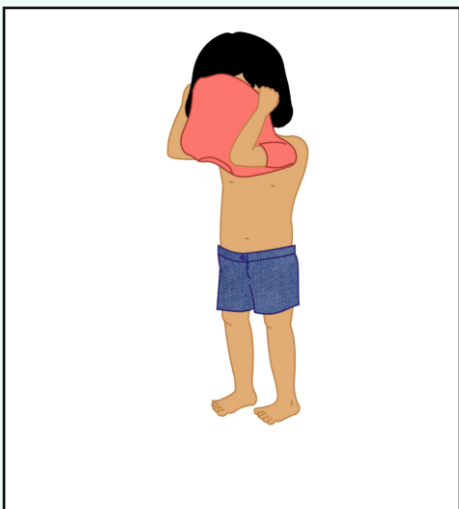
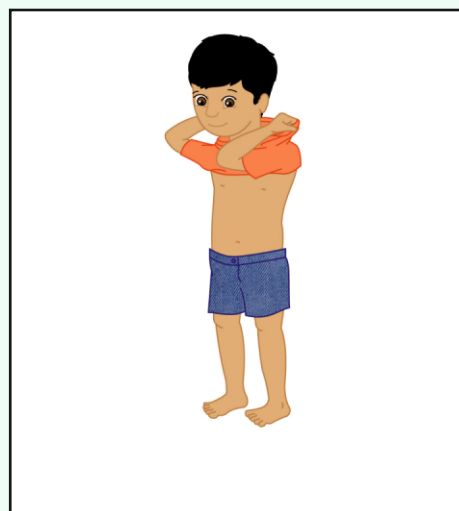
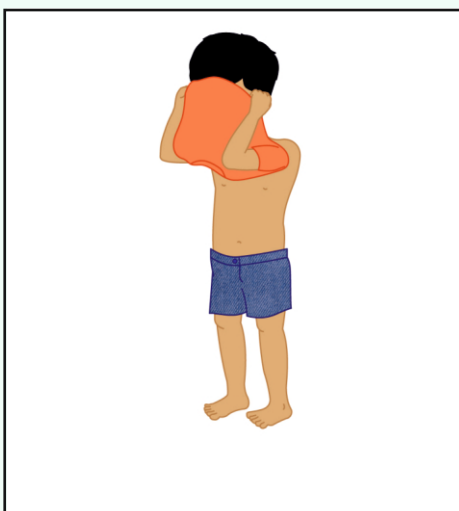
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION 2

Hold



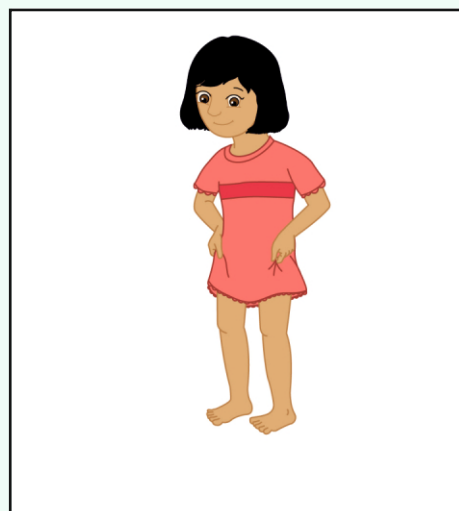
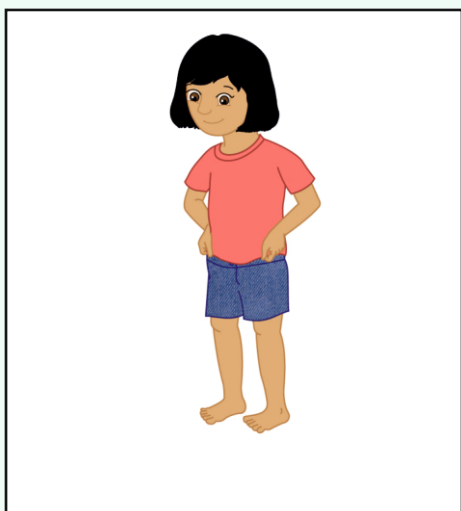
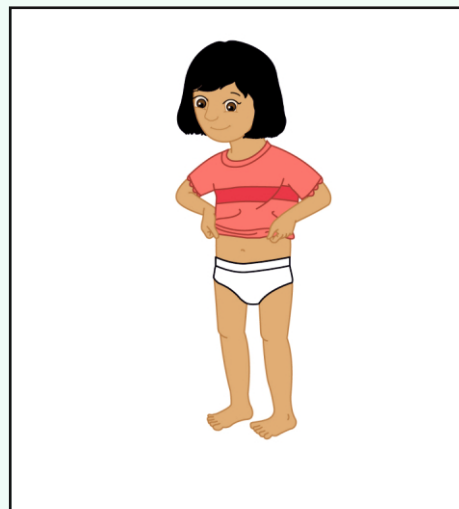
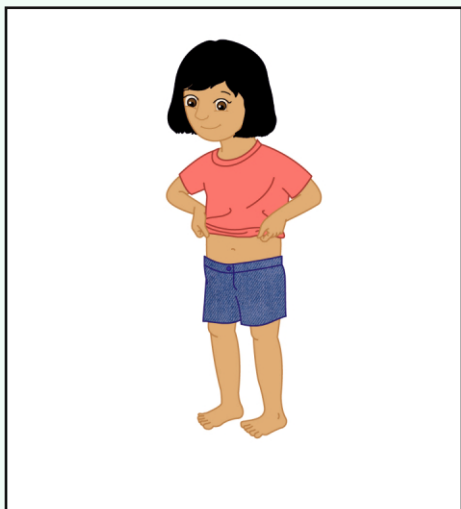
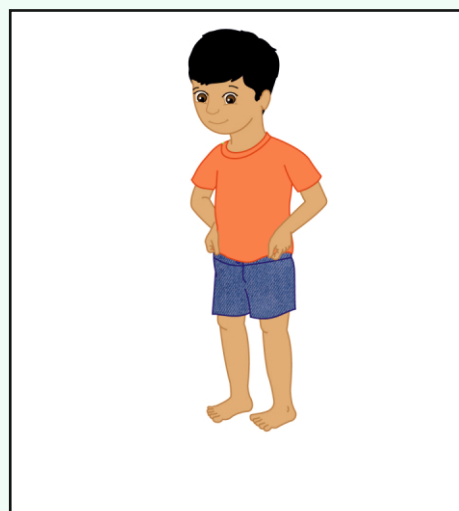
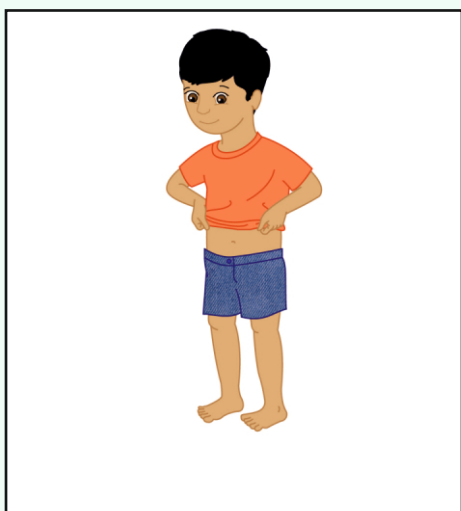
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION 2

Put in Head

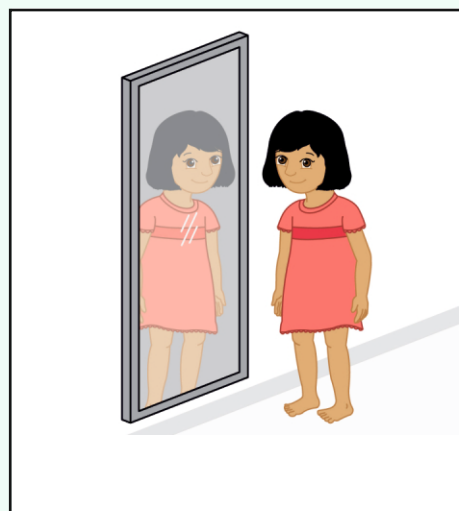
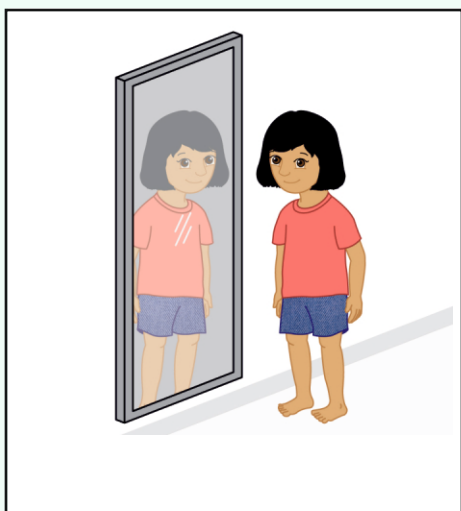
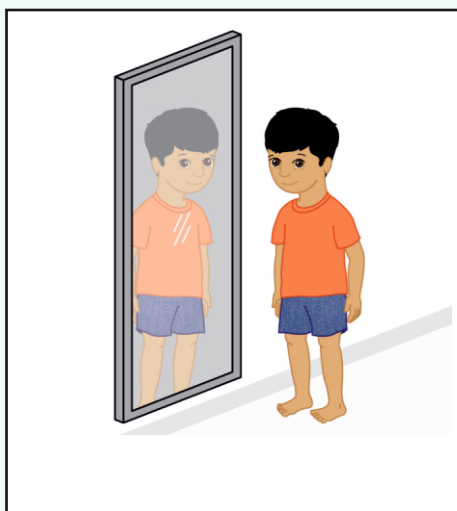


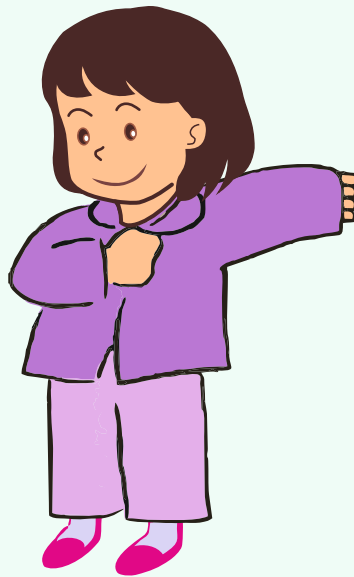
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT CLOSED: WEAR – OPTION 2

Pull Down



Look in Mirror






UPPER GARMENTS – FRONT OPEN

SOME GARMENTS such as shirts, jackets open from front and usually come with fasteners such as buttons or zippers. Sometimes, it is possible to pull such garments over head and wear or take them off like a t-shirt – without manipulating the fasteners. However, some garments such as jackets, cannot be worn quite in the same way. This is an important skill for children to learn to achieve independence in the dressing and undressing routine.


Getting Started


 Ensure everything you need is in place:

- ✓ A range of child's daily use garments that are open from the front such as shirt and jackets



Suggested Sequence to Teach

 Remove garment

 Wear garment



Suggested Words to Use




 *Take Off Garment*

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (with one hand)
3. Hold (with other hand)
4. Pull back from shoulder
5. Pull back from other shoulder
6. Hold sleeve (from behind)
7. Pull out arm
8. Pull out other arm

Wear Garment

1. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)
2. Hold (from collar/neck, so that front faces the right direction)
3. Put in arm
4. Hold (from collar / neck)
5. Put in other arm
6. Pull in front (with both hands)
7. Manipulate fasteners (if required, use specific words)

Teaching the Sequence

-  Focus on teaching one skill at a time. Till such time as the child is independent, provide the necessary support to open and/or close fasteners such as zippers or buttons. Although part of the sequence, teach them as separate activities as described earlier.
-  Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
-  Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.



Things to Keep in Mind

- 👤 Use the same sequence and instructions for all garments that open from the front such as buttoned shirts, jackets, coats, dresses etc.
- 👤 Start with simple clothes with short sleeves and loose fits that the child can adjust easily.



- 👤 In the beginning when wearing garments with long sleeves such as t-shirts or sweaters, scrunch up the sleeve so that the arm and neck opening is close to the body. This makes it easier for the child to slide in the arm. Once the child has practiced enough, it will be easier for the child to slide in arm without the scrunch. Once the child is independent in other aspects, you can also teach the child to scrunch up the garment. Scrunching up can also be practiced when wearing socks, lowers etc.

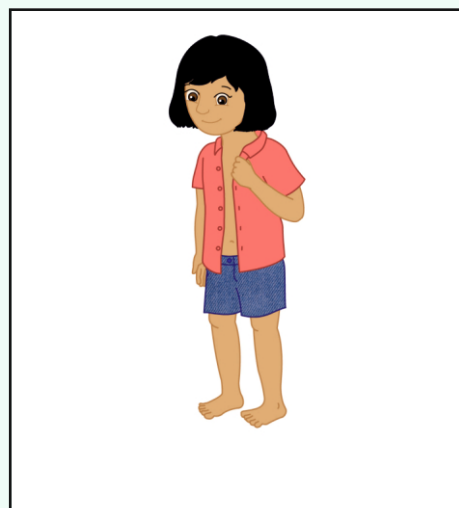
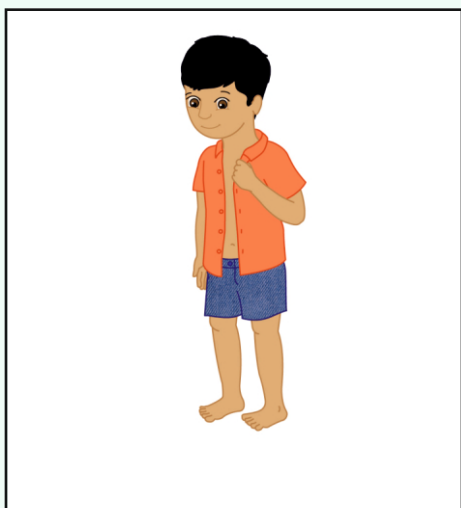
UPPER GARMENTS—FRONT OPEN

-  Heavy garments such as jackets, coats and sweaters are easier to wear if they are either held up or laid out on a flat surface such as on a bed.
-  Practice the skill in a room or bathroom to strengthen the concept of privacy.

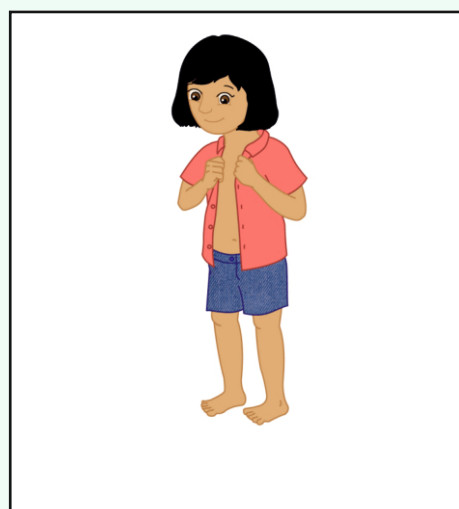
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT OPEN: TAKE OFF

Hold

One Hand



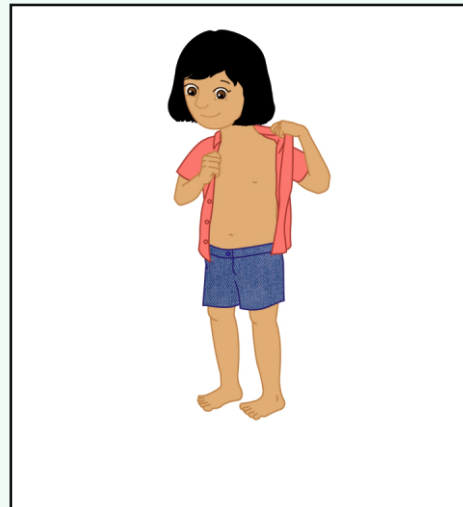
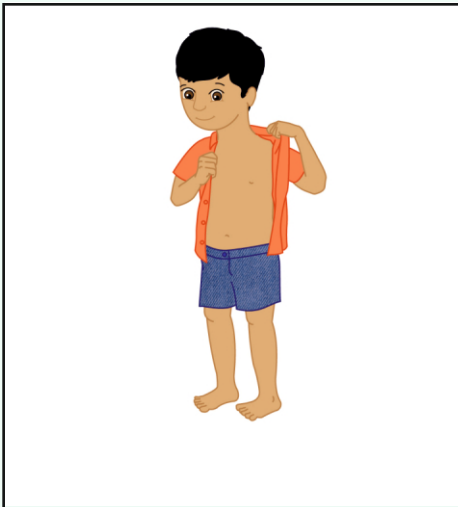
Other Hand



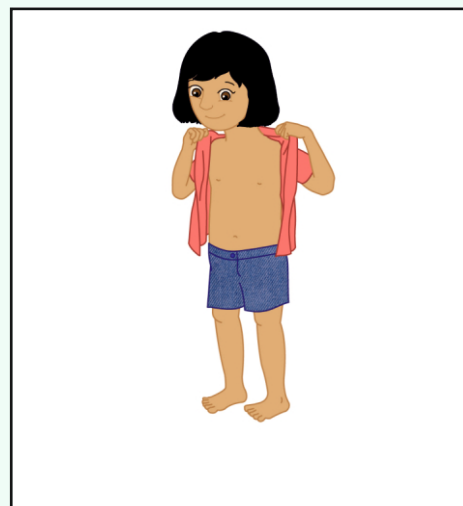
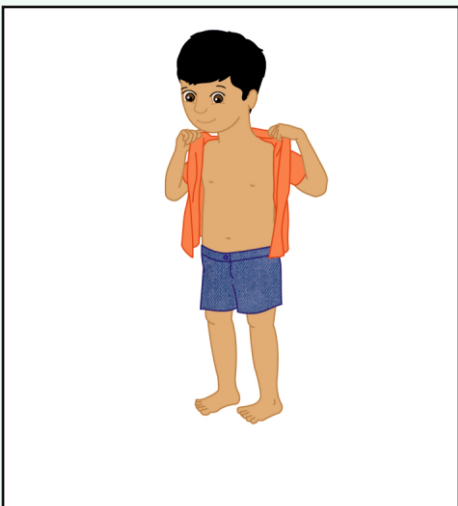
UPPER GARMENTS FRONT OPEN: TAKE OFF

Pull Back

Left Shoulder

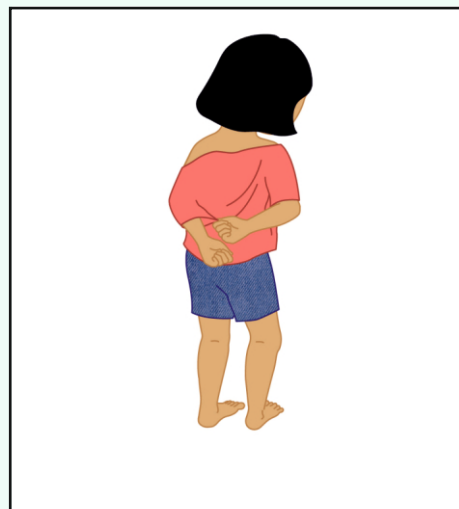
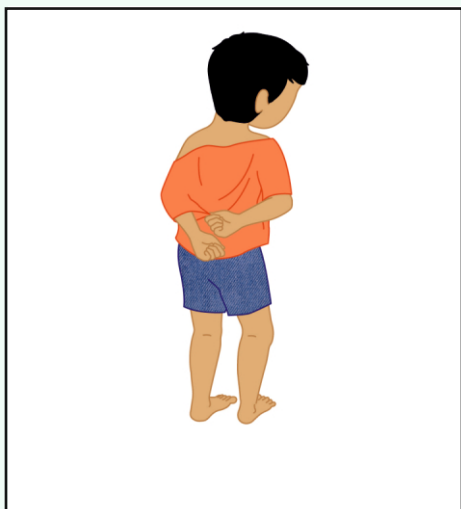


Right Shoulder

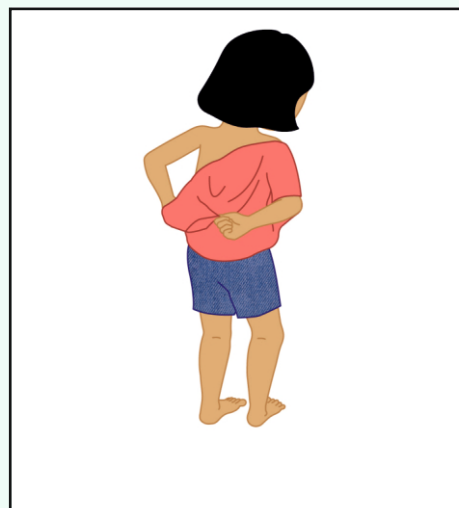


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT OPEN: TAKE OFF

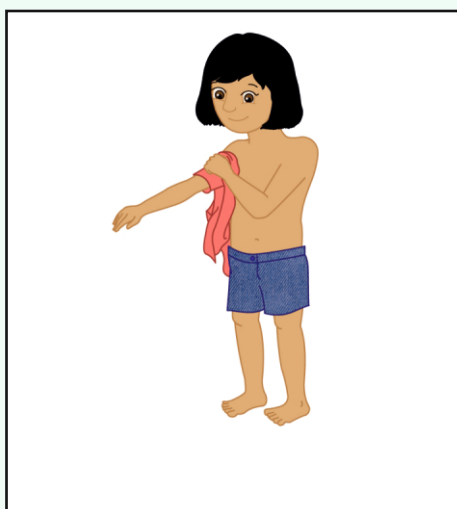
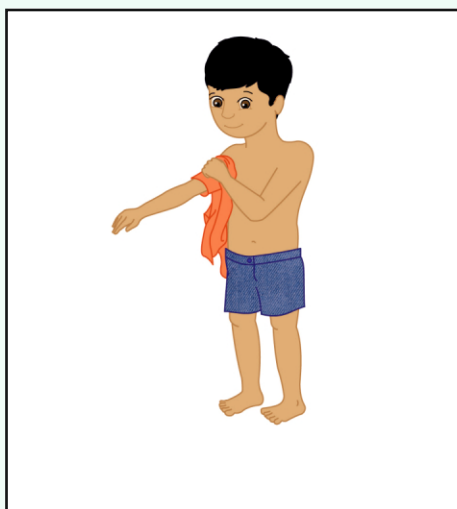
Hold Sleeve



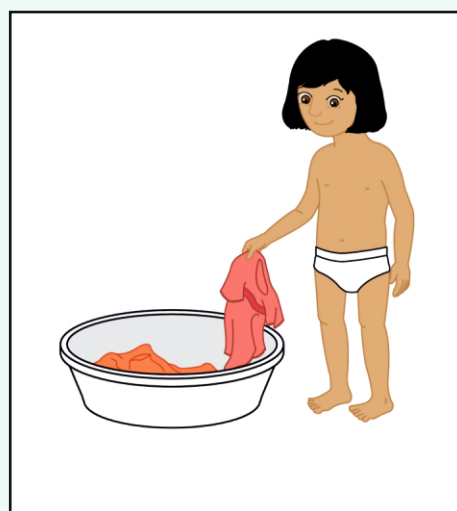
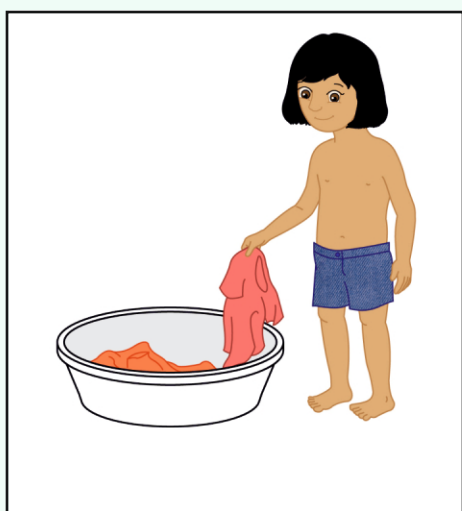
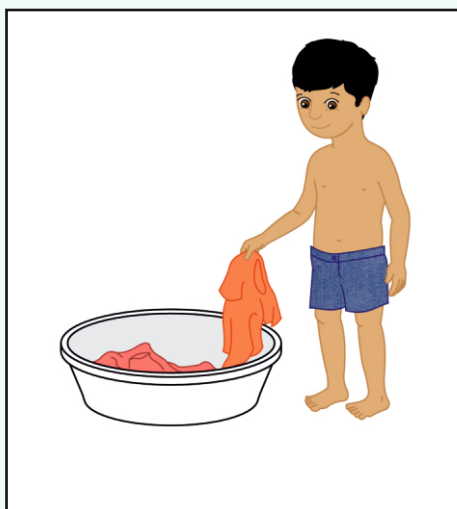
Pull Out Arm



Pull Out Arm

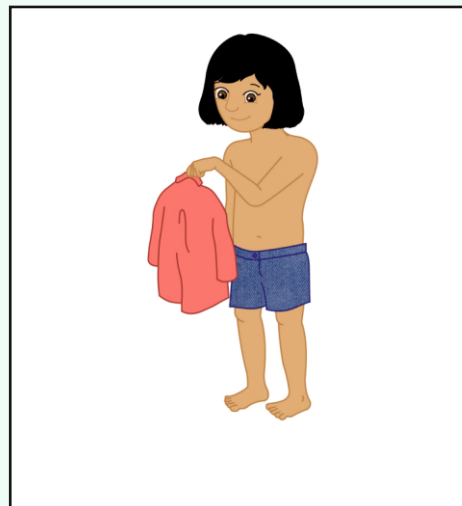
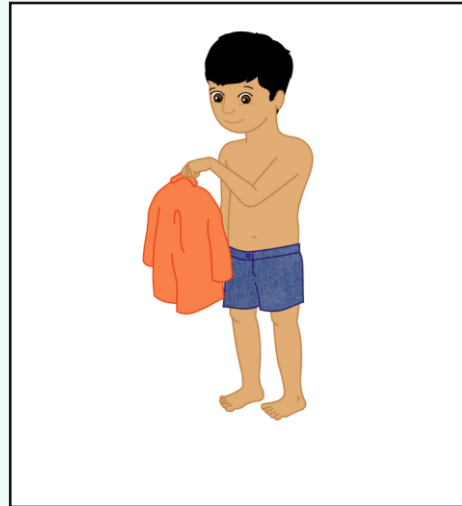


Put in Basket

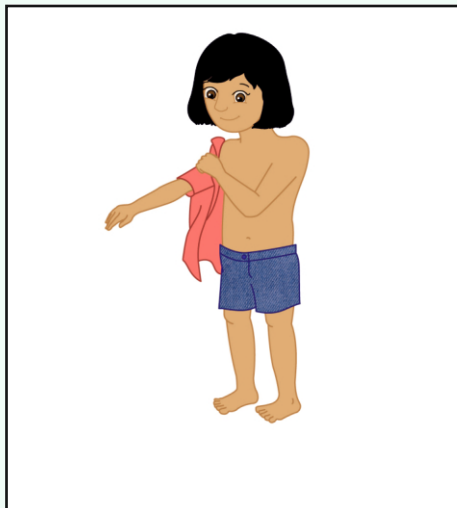
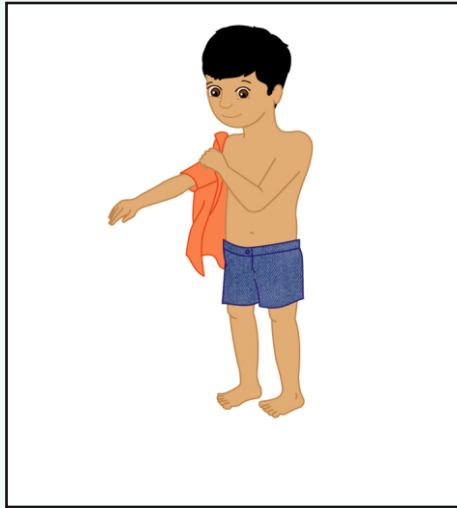


UPPER GARMENTS FRONT OPEN: WEAR

Hold



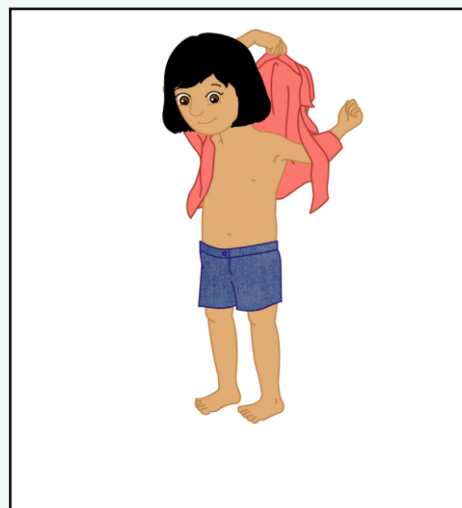
Put in Arm



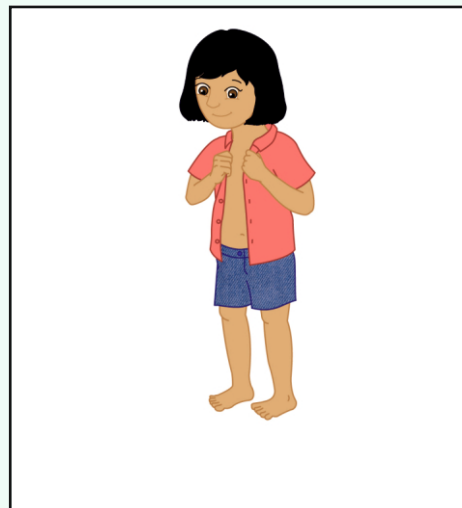
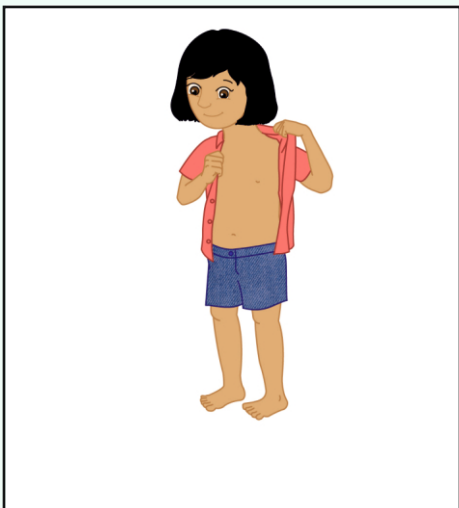
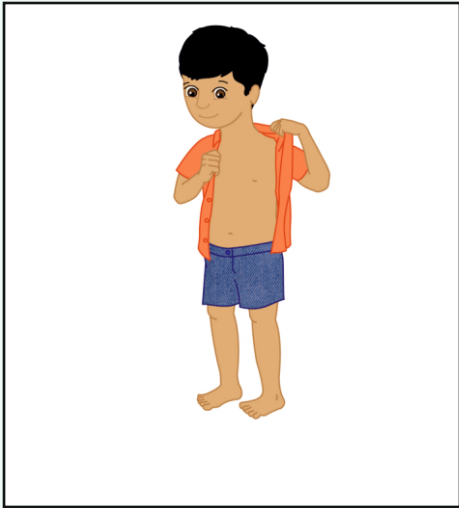
Hold Collar / Neck



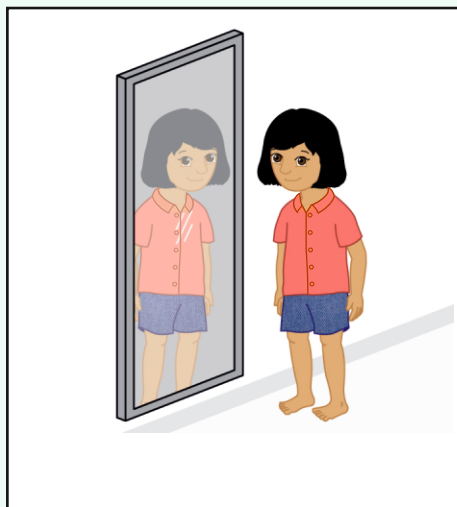
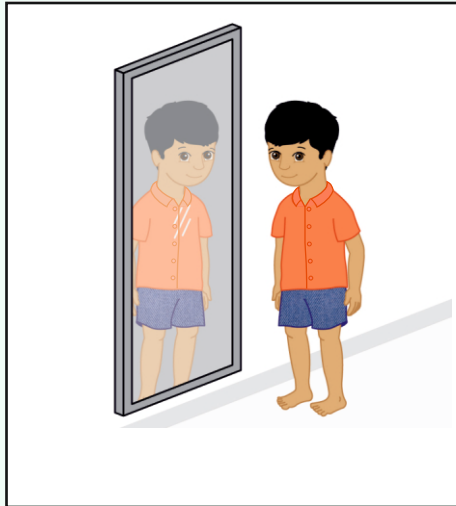
Put in Arm



Pull in Front



Look in Mirror





FOOTWEAR



SHOES AND SANDALS

IT IS IMPORTANT for a child to learn to take off and wear a range of footwear including slippers, shoes and sandals independently. The skill may be introduced with young children when they are learning to identify and differentiate between the left footwear from the right.


Getting Started


- 🏠 Ensure everything you need is in place:



- ✓ Different styles of footwear that the child uses in everyday life
- 🏠 Place the footwear such that the child put shoes or sandals on correct foot i.e. left shoe on left foot and right shoe on right foot. Some ways to teach the child to differentiate left from right have been discussed later.

Suggested Sequence to Teach

 Take off shoes and sandals

 Wear shoes and sandals

Suggested Words to Use

 *Take Off Shoes and Sandals*



1. Manipulate fasteners (if required)
2. Hold (from heel)
3. Pull out




 *Wear Shoes and Sandals*

1. Check shoe (left / right, if required)
2. Manipulate fasteners (if required)
3. Hold shoe (with both hands)
4. Put toe in





5. Put in foot
6. Press down heel
7. Manipulate fasteners (if required)


Teaching the Sequence


-  Focus on teaching one skill at a time. Till such time as the child becomes independent, provide full support to open and/or close fasteners such as laces, buckles or Velcro etc. Although part of the sequence, teach them as separate activities as already described.
-  Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*.
-  Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.


Things to Keep in Mind

-  Use the same sequence and instructions for shoes, sandals and other footwear.
-  Start with footwear that is a slightly loose fit, or a slightly larger size that a child will be able to adjust easily.



 Have the child sit comfortably on a chair or floor. Some children find it easier to keep foot on a stool while sitting on a chair.

 Facilitate simultaneous use of both hands.

 Some children need support to differentiate between the left footwear from the right footwear. Some simple activities as illustrated in the figures below can bring in clarity:

- ✓ Draw a large dot on the insoles (where the arch of the foot will be placed). Teach the child to check that the dots are close to each other.
- ✓ Draw one half of a figure (e.g. a rectangle or a child's favourite cartoon character) on each of insoles (where the arch of the foot will be placed). Teach the child to check that the pattern fits (like a jigsaw puzzle).



SHOES AND SANDALS

- ✓ Use slippers with a loop across big toe and tell the child to put the big toe in the loop.
- ✓ Talk about the way different footwear fit. For instance, when wearing slippers, little toe does not touch the ground; buckles on shoes and sandals are on the outside.

Manipulate Fasteners

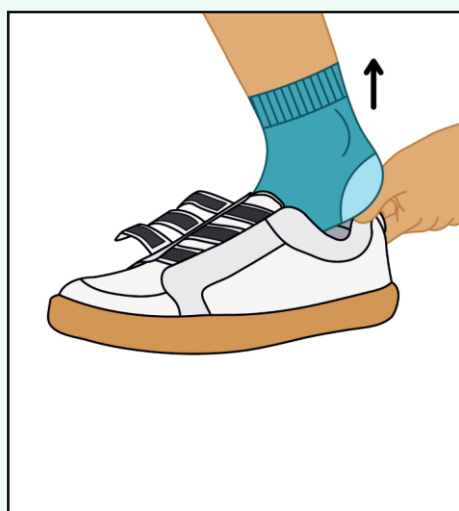
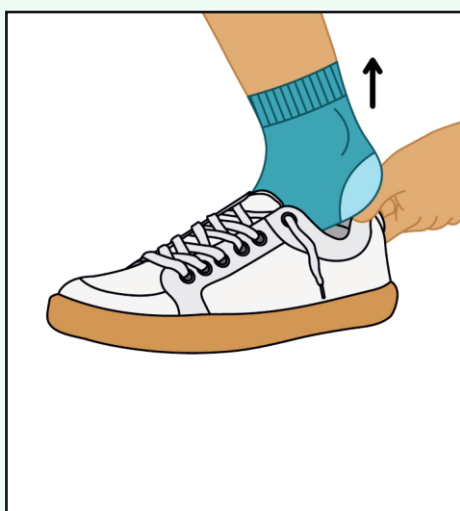


SHOES AND SANDALS: TAKE OFF

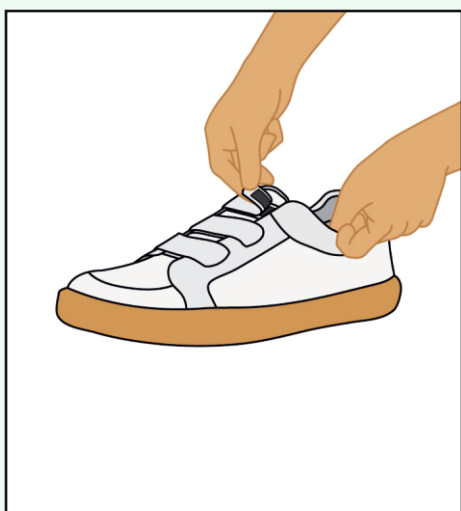
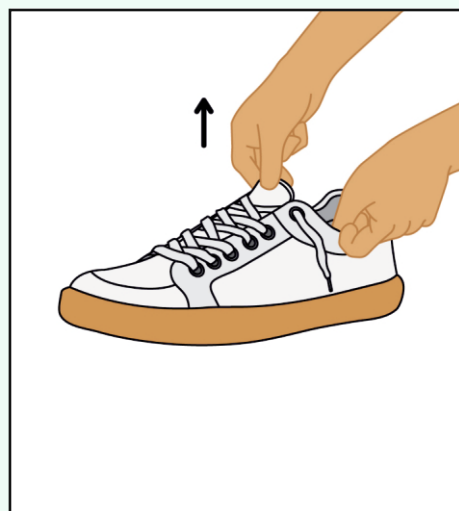
Hold



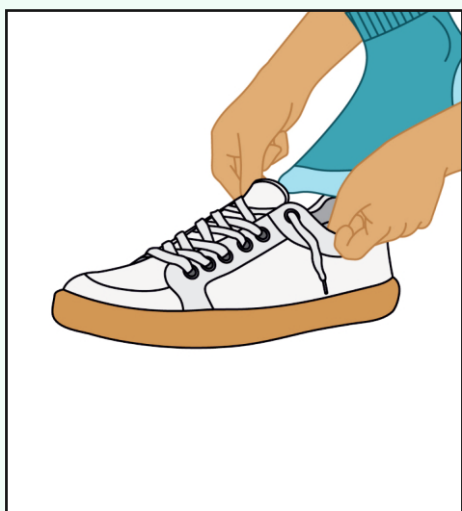
Pull Out



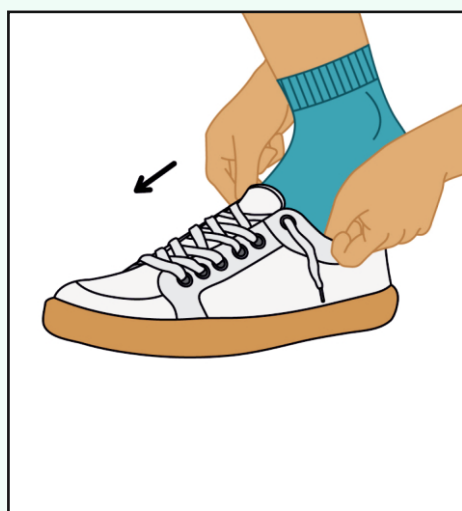
Hold Shoe



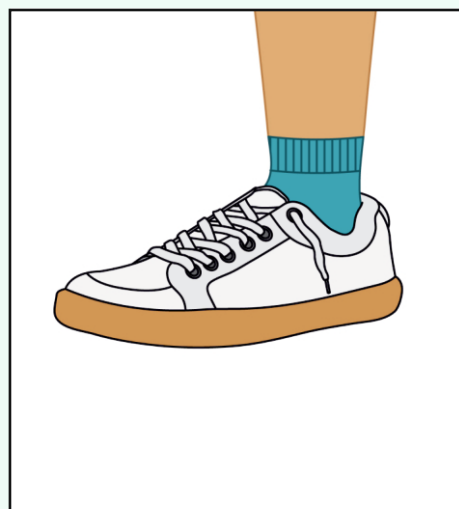
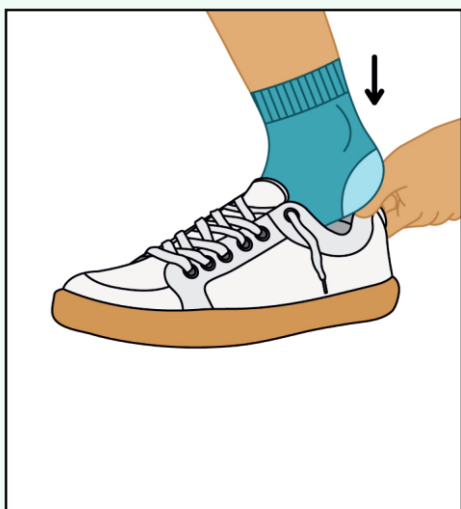
Put Toe In



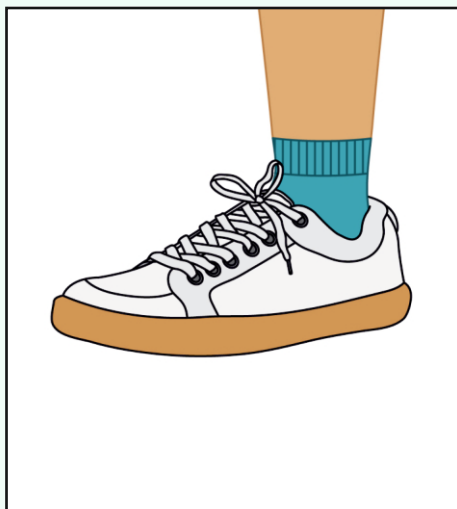
Put In Foot



Press Down Heel



Manipulate Fasteners





SOCKS

A COMPLEX ACTION that requires simultaneous use of both hands, and some degree of motor coordination, this skill is best introduced when a child is comfortable keeping feet covered in socks and/or shoes.

Getting Started


- 🧩 Ensure everything you need is in place:


- ✓ Pair of socks




- 🧩 Start with socks that have heels in a colour different from the rest of the sock. This helps the child in understanding that the coloured section fits over the heel.
- 🧩 Draw a stripe on the top of the socks where the toes fit.

Suggested Sequence to Teach

 Take off socks

 Wear socks

Suggested Words to Use

 *Take Off Socks*

Option 1

1. Hold socks (at the open end with both hands)
2. Pull down
3. Pull out



Option 2

1. Hold socks (near the toes)
2. Pull out


SOCKS

Wear Socks

1. Hold socks (at the open end with both hands)
2. Scrunch (the socks)
3. Put toe in
4. Pull (socks over foot)
5. Pull up (socks over heel and ankle)
6. Pull (over calves, if applicable)



Teaching the Sequence

 Using the words suggested, teach the skill using backward chaining as described in the *Overview*. For instance: to teach the child to wear socks.

- ✓ When we start the focus is only to teach the child the last step, i.e. pull socks over the heel and ankle. The adult provides the necessary support on the preceding steps. Initially the adult provides as much support as the child requires on this step, and then as the child learns, the adult gradually reduces support so that the child can learn to complete this step independently.

- ✓ We focus on step 4, i.e. pull socks over foot, when the child independently pulls up socks over heel and ankle. Once again, the adult provides as much support as the child requires to complete the first preceding steps. When teaching this step, the adult initially provides as much support as the child requires, and then gradually reduces support so that the child learns to complete this independently. Since the child is already independent, at all times, the adult lets the child independently pull up sock over heel and ankle.
- 👤 Similarly teach the rest of the steps so that the child can take off and wear socks independently.

Start by providing the support the child requires to complete each step and reduce it gradually.



Things to Keep in Mind

- 👤 Start with loose fit, easy stretch, ankle length socks that a child will be able to remove and wear easily. Gradually practice with socks with varied lengths, thickness, and elasticity.

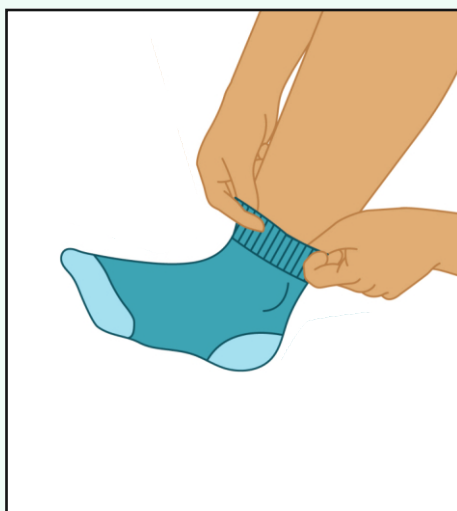


- 👤 Have the child sit comfortably on a chair or floor. Some children find it easier to keep foot on a stool while sitting on a chair.

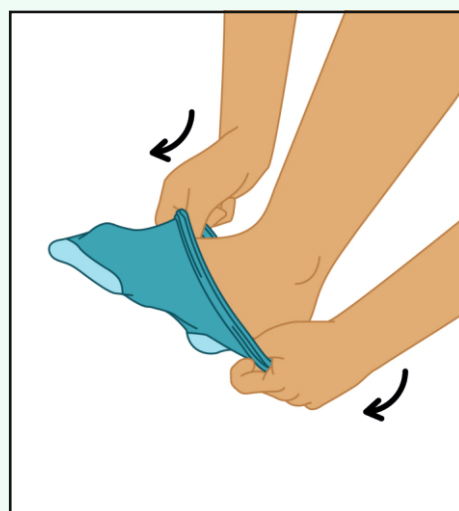
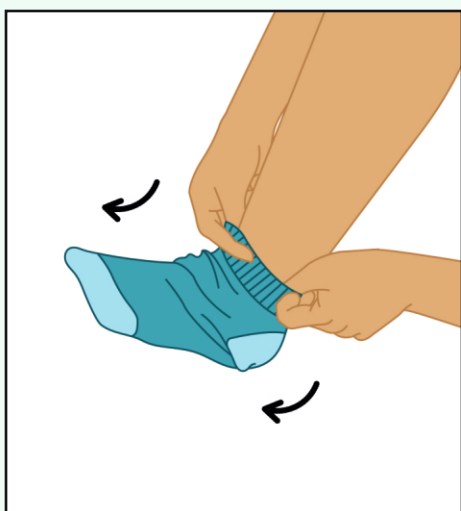
SOCKS

-  Facilitate simultaneous use of both hands.
-  As discussed earlier, some children with autism are sensitive to certain fabrics. Some may enjoy a snug fit, others prefer loose fitting socks and yet others may resist wearing socks altogether. Work with the child's preference.

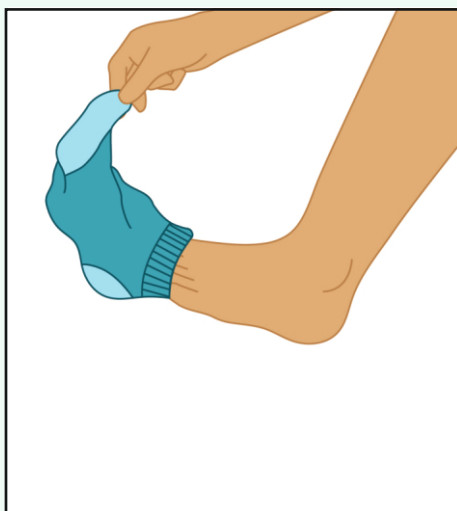
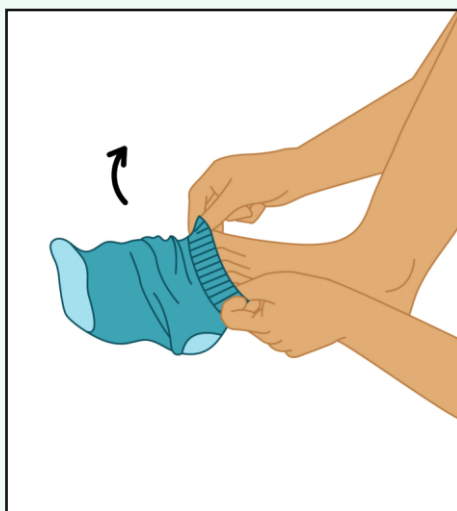
Hold Socks



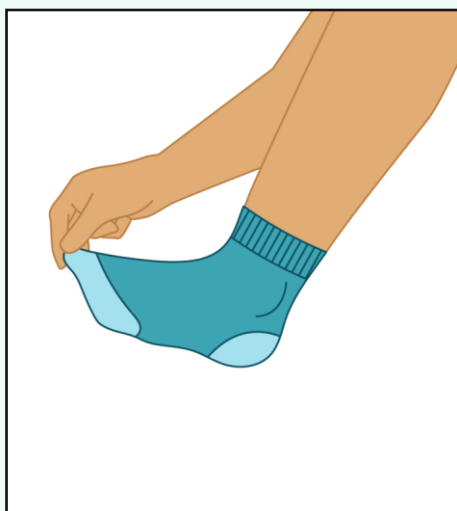
Pull Down



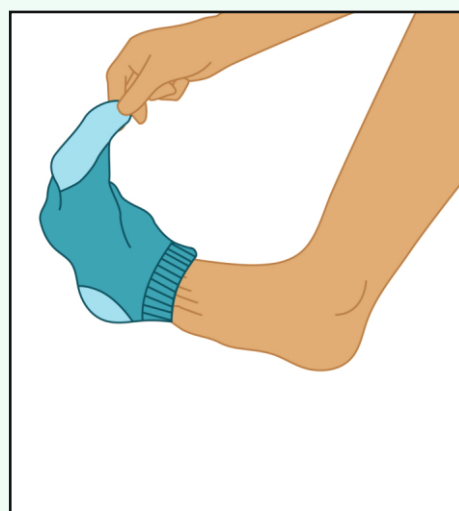
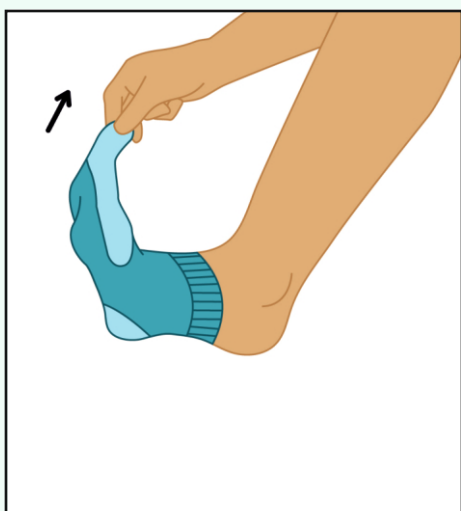
Pull Out



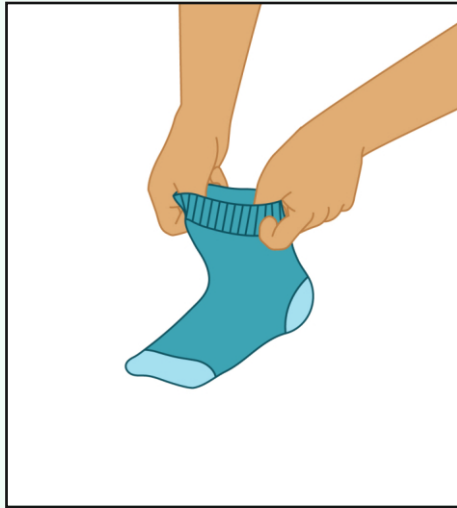
Hold Socks



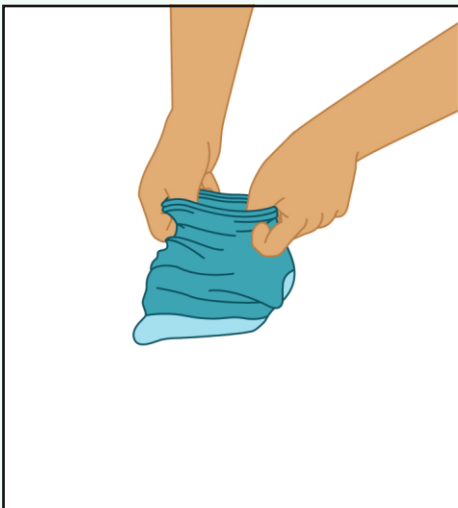
Pull Out



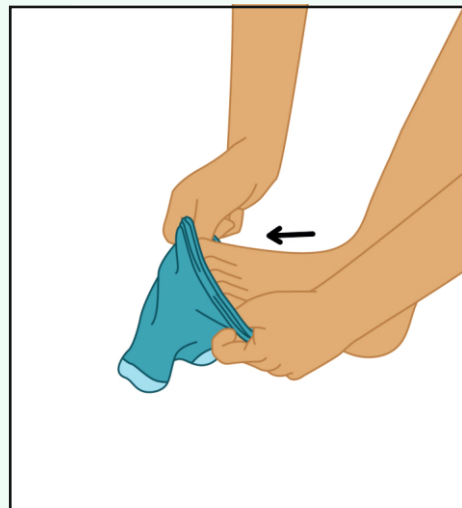
Hold Socks



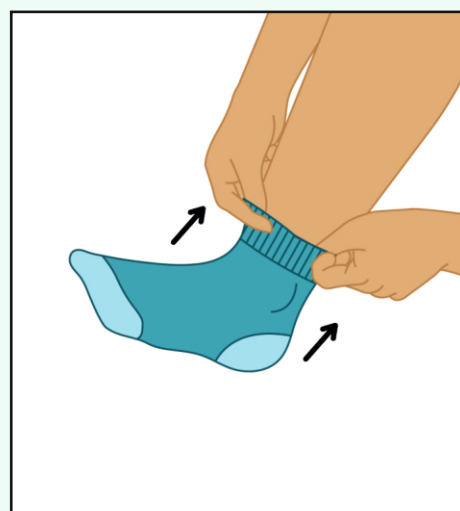
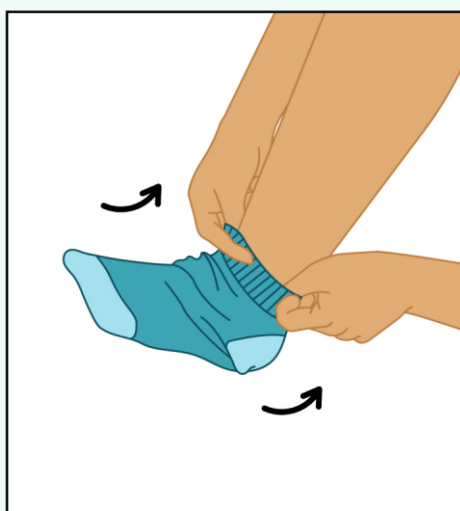
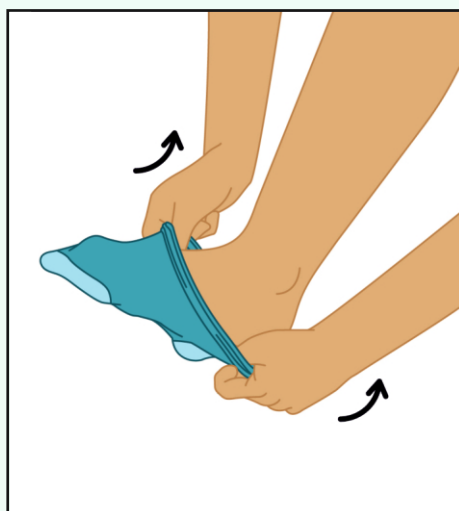
Scrunch



Put Toe In



Pull









NEXT STEPS


NEXT STEPS

ONCE THE CHILD is independent, there are additional things you will want the child to learn to. The goals may be prioritised depending on the child's age, skills, strengths, and the family environment.

-  Differentiate front from back and inside from outside of each garment.
 - ✓ Talk to the child while turning clothes that are inside out to demonstrate the process. Since this may not be something that the child needs to do every time, the goal is for the child to see, hear and understand the concept, so s/he can do it as necessary.
 - ✓ If the child is not bothered by tags, use them in pre-stitched garments as a visual indicator. Sometimes the tags differ in their look (e.g. printed on the fabric) and position (e.g. attached to the side of the garment). Cut off and sew the same / fresh labels at a consistent place.

- ✓ Sew on a specific home-made tag (e.g. name, initials, or colour) in a consistent place across all garments. To reinforce the concept of 'my belonging', the same indicator may also be used on other belongings e.g. school related items, bathing related items, blankets etc.
-  Dressing up for different occasions. For instance, what we wear on a regular day at home may be different from clothes we sleep in at night. We may also decide to wear something 'special' when we have visitors at home or for a festival. Likewise, when we go out, we decide clothes depending on where we are going. So, we dress up differently for school (e.g. uniform), for the playground or the market, or when we go to visit family or friends. We may also have different sets of footwear for home (e.g. slippers), school (closed used), going out (sandals), and other occasions.
-  Dressing up appropriate for the weather and season. For instance, we may wear a raincoat today (not every day) because it is raining, or we wear a heavier jacket today because it is colder than yesterday. This is also applicable for our footwear.
-  Understand how clothes drape and fit. For instance, check in the mirror that the:
 - ✓ Clothes are not short, tight, or oversized
 - ✓ Collars are in place
 - ✓ Seams are correctly aligned

NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Fasteners are in place (buttoned correctly; trousers zipped)
 - ✓ Clothes are worn neatly (shirt is tucked in properly, garments are in appropriate place e.g. at the waist or the neck; unlike a shirt, kurta is not tucked in the pyjamas etc.)
 - ✓ Clothes are clean i.e. washed, do not have stains, and do not smell stale
 - ✓ Clothes are neatly ironed
 - ✓ Clothes are not torn or in need of repair (e.g. button is missing)
 - ✓ Socks match
-  Learn about clothes that go together. For instance, kurta can be worn with pyjamas, and also with jeans, or which skirt and top, as well as about colour combinations.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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AFA's Vision is a society that views the interdependence of people of every ability as valuable and enriching and seeks to provide equal opportunities to all