

Occupational Therapy Department

Classroom Strategies

Performance Concern: Self-Help Skills/Fasteners

General Information: Self Help Skills are required for functioning independently. They include dressing and using fasteners.

Instructional Recommendations:

- Give one direction at a time. After one action is successfully completed, add another direction.
- Help the student physically move through the action of taking off or putting on clothing such as a jacket. Try different methods. (Putting both hands in and going overhead)
- Lay out clothing with labels for cueing and tabs to hold.
- Talk to the parent. If the child has difficulty with buttons or zippers on his pants suggest pants with elastic waistbands.
- Bigger buttons or fasteners on shirts and jackets are easier to manipulate.
- Put a ring or pull-tab on zipper of pants or jackets.
- Use Velcro or elastic shoelaces for children having difficulty with shoe tying.
- Use 2 different colors of shoelaces when teaching shoe tying to provide the child with visual cues.

Additional Classroom Activities or Strategies to Support the Development of the Skill:

- Use lacing cards. Have child thread string through holes to make different patterns.
- Button/Zipper activities. The child is able to practice fasteners on a flat surface.
- Clothes pin. Have the student use clothespin using first two fingers and thumb to pin items together to build hand strength.
- Tweezers or Tongs. Have the student use tweezers or tongs of varying sizes to pick up and sort objects (cotton balls, erasers, ect.) for fine motor control.

Consult your school occupational therapist when additional support or interventions are needed.