

Clothes Call

Primary Objectives

7a. Uses fingers and hands

Why It's Important

Learning to zip a zipper is a challenging task for your child to accomplish. It can be a frustrating experience when she is just learning how to hold onto the bottom of her jacket while keeping a close eye on the zipper and using her other hand to try to place the bottom of the zipper into its slot. When helping your child learn how to button, zip, or perform other dressing skills, be sure to use the same directions each time and be patient. Always let her perform the task independently as far as she can before stepping in to help.

Materials

Shoes that children wear for different purposes (e.g., sandals, snow boots, sneakers, and formal shoes); jackets; coats; button-down shirts or vests

What You Do

1. Provide a variety of outfits with buttons and zippers. Invite your child to explore the collection. Talk with her about getting dressed. *What would you like to wear this morning? What do you think is the easiest thing to put on? What is the hardest?*
2. Invite your child to select an outfit and put it on. Watch as she puts the clothes on by herself. Offer guidance if she asks for it, but do not take over and do it all for her.
3. If your child has any difficulty, come up with a rhyme or jingle that might help her remember how to put on a shirt. *Head goes in the big hole, arms go in the small holes.*
4. Once your child has put on the shirt or jacket, let her try to button or zip it. Demonstrate how to do it if she has not seen it done before. Then let her try. Watch as she holds the garment with one hand and manipulates the button or zipper with the other hand.
5. The key to this task is that you demonstrate, your child practices, and eventually she accomplishes. Give her many opportunities to practice this activity, as she may need to do it several times before she is successful. Remember to be consistent with your directions and patient while your child figures it out.