

**Self-Help Skills**

**in a Remote Learning Environment**

Presented by:

PIRT & School Nurses

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**How Can Parents Assist Their Child in Developing Self-Help Skills in a Remote Learning Environment?**

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**Self-Help Skills:**

● Enable your child to meet their own needs and involve activities/

behaviors that eventually lead to independence.

● Children that are included in self- help activities will learn to contribute to the family, care for themselves, and will care for their personal

belongings. It provides the child with a foundation for adulthood.





➔ As your preschooler grows and matures, there are certain self-help skills such as washing hands, getting dressed, using utensils that they will need to to learn to do on their own. They are often referred as activities of daily living (ADL’s ).

➔ These everyday tasks are things we adults often take for granted, but they are things that need to be taught and practiced.

➔ Whenever your child tries something new, it’s important to focus on the journey (the method) not the destination (the result).

**When children practice self-help skills such as feeding and dressing themselves, they practice their large and small motor skills, gain confidence in their ability to try new things and build their self-esteem and pride in their independence.** 

**There are four main types of self-help skills:**

➔ **Self Feeding** 

➔ **Independent dressing and grooming**

➔ **Hygiene and Toileting**

➔ **Helping with daily chores like table setting and picking up toys**

**( Extension Alliance for Better Childcare)**

**What are Self-Help Activities?**

● **Washing hands** before eating, after toileting and playing outside

● **Using the toilet** as development allows, including flushing and wiping ● **Covering the mouth** when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue

● **Using grooming supplies**, such as a toothbrush and comb, and helping to bathe themself ● **Eating independently**, using utensils and a cup as abilities allow

● **Cleaning up their own spills and messes** with paper towel, sponge, etc. ● **Putting their own garbage** into trash can

● **Helping** to make their bed

● **Choosing clothes** from two choices; and dressing themself, at least partially ● **Putting dirty clothes** in a laundry basket and clean ones in drawers or on low hooks ● **Getting personal toys and books** from child-height shelves

● **Playing with toys**, such as puzzles and blocks and **putting them away** after play ● **Keeping track** of their favorite blanket or stuffed animal

● **Helping with simple toy repair**, like taping torn pages in a book

**Activities to Promote Self-Help Skills**

➔ **Practice doing a small part of a task** each day because it is easier to learn new skills in smaller sections.

➔ **Have your child observe other family members** performing everyday self-care skills.

➔ **Role-play self care tasks** such as eating dressing, or brushing teeth with teddy bears, dolls, action figures, etc. Doing it on others can help learning it before then doing it on yourself.

➔ **Allow the child to brush your hair or teeth** first before brushing their own.

➔ **Use a timer to indicate how long** they must tolerate an activity they may not enjoy, such as brushing their teeth.



**What Can Be Done To Improve Self-Help Skills?**

● **Create a visual schedule** of the steps involved in a task to be completed.

● **Build a reward chart** to celebrate independent completion of or attempt at completion of tasks.

● **Break down self-help skills** into smaller steps and support the child through each step so that, in time, they can do more for themselves.

● **Use the same routine or strategy each time** you complete the same task to help them learn it.

● **Be consistent with words and signs used** to assist the child and keep instructions short and simple.

● **Ensure that there is enough time available for the child** to participate in self- help activities without feeling rushed (i.e. practice dressing on the weekend to start with before then doing it before rushing to preschool or school).

**Charts to Promote Getting Dressed Independently**

**Books About Getting Dressed**

➔ Bear Gets Dressed – A Guessing Game Story – Harriet Ziefert

➔ Froggy Gets Dressed – Jonathan London

➔ Get Dressed, Max and Millie – Felicity Brooks

➔ How Do I Put It On? – Shigeo Watanabe 

➔ Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear – Nancy White Carlstrom ➔ Little Mouse Gets Ready – Jeff Smith

➔ Maggie and Michael Get Dressed – Denise Fleming ➔ Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons – Eric Litwin ➔ This is Me – Richard Scarry

➔ Freddie Gets Dressed (board book) – Nicola Smee ➔ Getting Dressed (board book) – Scholastic Let’s Chat series

**Eliminating Bottle & Pacifier Tips For Parents** 

★ Most pediatricians recommend weaning from the pacifier between 8 - 12 months.

★ Replace the pacifier with a small blanket or stuffed animal. ★ Start eliminating the pacifier by limiting use to certain places (bed) and then only during certain times (sleep), until it is finally gone.

★ Most pediatricians recommend weaning from the bottle between 12 - 15 months because after 18 months of age it becomes a habit.

★ Replace the bottle with a sippy cup.

★ Introduce the sippy cup between 6 - 9 months with milk or formula. ★ At about one year, once the cup is mastered, tell your child that he/she is a ‘big kid” and gets to use a cup instead of a bottle “all the time now”.

**Toilet Training Tips For Parents**

❏ Parents play a key role: direct, motivate, reinforce

❏ Before starting: see your pediatrician to check for developmental readiness ❏ Watch your child for readiness clues

❏ Coordinate your plan with other caregivers like babysitters ❏ Start a routine with regular reminders during the day, night and after meals ❏ Introduce your child to the “potty” - it is more secure than an adult size toilet ❏ Let your child flush the toilet if they want to - sometimes the sound is “scary” 

❏ Dress your child is loose, easy to remove clothing

❏ Be patient and set aside time to work with your child

❏ “Setbacks and accidents” are to be expected and are normal ❏ Praise your child for a good job

**Potty-Training Visual Directions**

**Bedtime Routine Tips** 

**for Parents**

1. A regular, daily schedule for children enhances a bedtime routine.

2. A bedtime routine helps to promote adequate sleep each night for a preschooler. 3. Regular, adequate sleep improves attention, behavior, learning, memory, emotions, and health.

4. Children 3 -5 years of age should sleep 10 - 13 hours per 24 hours including naps. 5. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends quiet time 30 minutes before bed when establishing a bedtime routine.

6. Limit “playtime” in bed. Keep your child’s bed a place to sleep rather than play. 7. All electronic screens should be turned off 30 minutes before bedtime and TV, computers and other screens not be allowed in children's bedrooms

**6 Tips for Raising an Independent Child** (Positive Parenting Solutions) **● Encourage Effort:**

**○** Encourage your kids to try new things

**○** Get out of their comfort zones

**○** Be creative without the pressure to succeed or win or be perfect

**● Family Contributions:**

**○** Every family member plays an important role in running a household

**● Promote Problem Solving:**

**○** Avoid trying to jump in and fix.

**○** When a problem arises, wait.

**○** Give your child the opportunity to come up with solutions

**● Take Time for Training:**

**○** Each week work on learning something new in a fun and engaging way. As children learn new skills and tasks, they feel more confident in learning the next one

**● Turn Over the Reins:**

**○** Allow your children to make small choices; it gives them a sense of control which leads to independent thinking.

**○** For example: Do you want an apple or a banana?

**● Structure as a Safety Net:**

**○** Provide a structured routine for mornings, afternoons, and evenings

**○** Structure provides a safety net that children need in order to try new things in a safe space

**Helpful Resources** 

**1. Nemours Children's Health Care**

**2. Sleep Guidelines; American Academy of Pediatrics 3. Potty Training; American Academy of Pediatrics 4. Developing Self-Help Skills**

**5. American Dental Association**

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