



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



Children's  
Disability  
Network  
Team



# Encouraging Independence

A Guide for Parents/Caregivers/Teachers

Waterford South City CDNT  
November 2022

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# Setting your Goal

- Is your goal parent led or child led?
- It has to be meaningful to the child



- Try to convert to a S.M.A.R.T. goal.

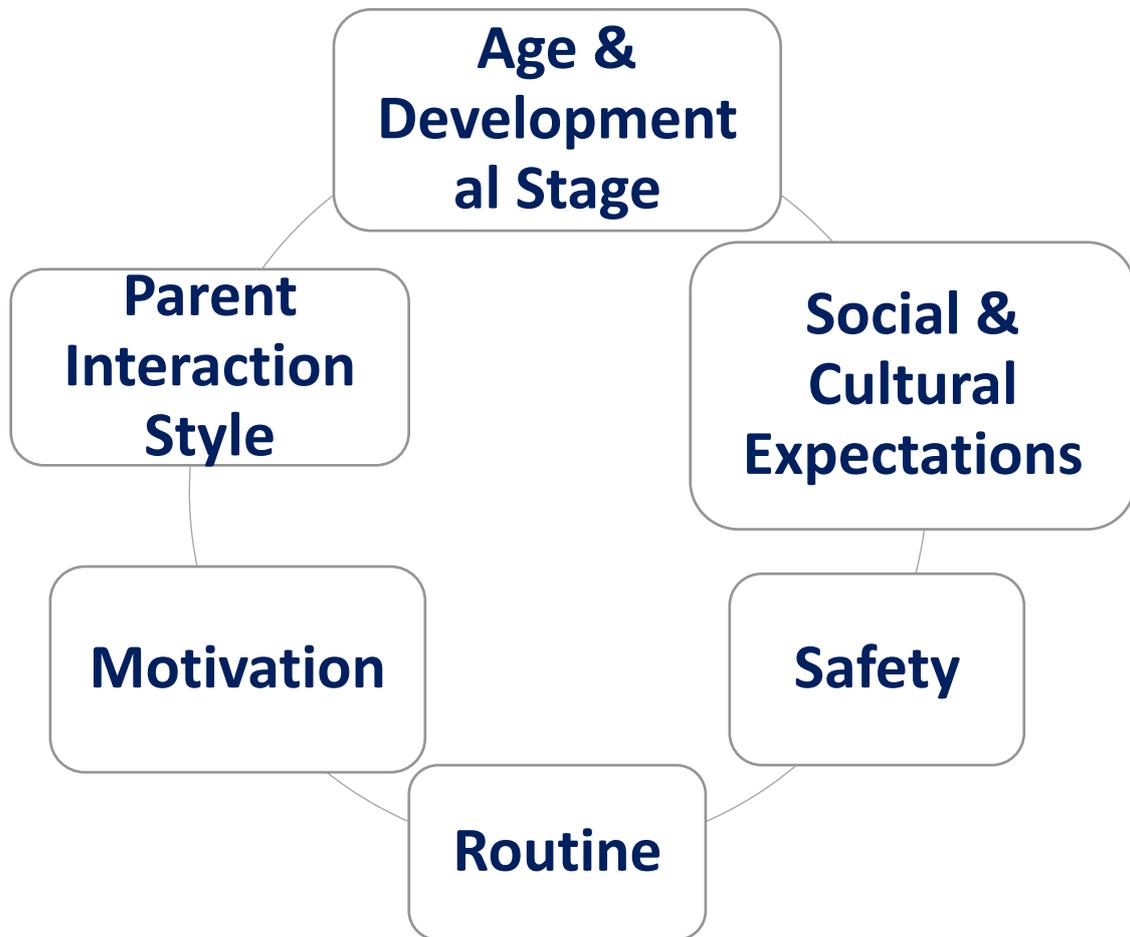


- Where is your child at now?
- Break the task down into steps
- Focus on one thing at a time.

## Sample Goals

- **Baseline (Where the child is now):**  
Kate is able to dress her lower half independently. She is not yet dressing her upper half.
- ✓ **Expected outcome:**  
Kate will be able to put on a loose T-shirt with verbal prompts within 2 months.
  
- **Baseline (Where the child is now):**  
Ben relies on an adult to cut up all his food.
- ✓ **Expected outcome:**  
Ben will be able to cut up soft food (such as a banana or fish finger) using a knife and fork within 3 months.
  
- **Baseline (Where the child is now):**  
Jack requires assistance to close the buttons on his school shirt.
- ✓ **Expected outcome:**  
Jack will close the buttons on his school shirt independently, apart from the top button within 2 months.
  
- **Baseline (Where the child is now):**  
Chloe does not tolerate having her teeth brushed.
- ✓ **Expected outcome:**  
Chloe will trial a variety of strategies to increase her tolerance to having her teeth brushed over a 1 month period, including using flavourless toothpaste, an electric toothbrush, a first then schedule and watching motivating videos.

When we talk about independence we need to consider:



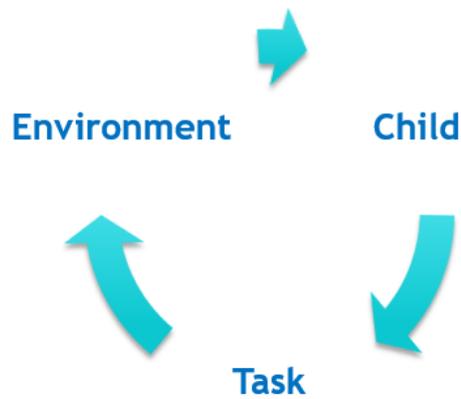
**Why do we encourage independence??**

- More self reliance gives the child more control over their life.
- To reduce frustration of being dependent on others.
- Build confidence and self-esteem to try new things.
- To Increase participation across settings.



## How can we encourage independence?

- Consider this interaction.



Environment	Task	Child
Positioning	Is it interesting for the child?	Physical challenges
Noise	Is it complicated?	Attention, concentration, memory
Light	Is it tiring?	Coordination
Distractions	Can it be adapted?	Understanding
Layout of items		Motivation/interests
Visual Support		Habits/routines
Adult Interaction Style		Past experiences
Language		Confidence

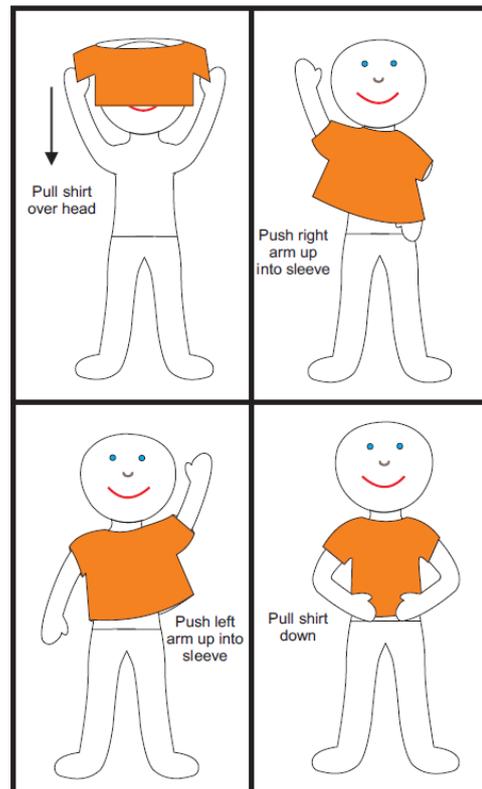
- ✓ Identify challenges
- ✓ Identify strategies
- ✓ Identify strengths
- Set a goal
- Practice and review!

## Strategies to Teach Self-Care Skills

- ✓ **Understand the steps** involved in each skill.
- ✓ Provide lots of opportunities to **practice** the skill.
- ✓ Ensure your child has the **time** they need to successfully complete the task.
- ✓ Use strategies that are **appropriate** for your individual child.
- ✓ Provide a lot of specific and positive feedback and **praise**.
- ✓ These skills can be difficult to learn and it is important to be patient and not to move on to the next step until your child is ready.

## Task Analysis

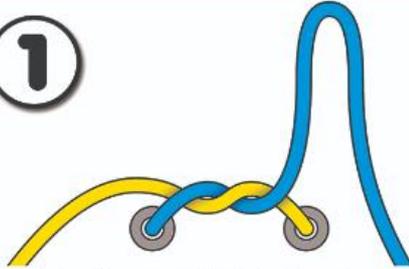
- ✓ Carry out the task yourself.
- ✓ Break down the task into specific steps.
- ✓ Write down each step.
- ✓ Take a picture of each step, if using visuals.
- ✓ Consider what level of support is needed for each step.
- ✓ There can be more than one way of completing a task. See which method works best for your child.



# Task Analysis for Tying Shoelaces

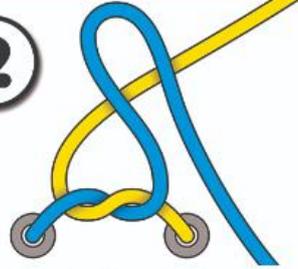
## Standard Knot

1



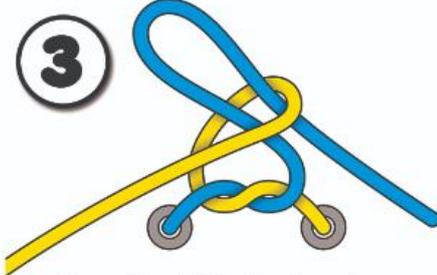
Tie a Left-over-Right starting knot. Make the right (blue) end into a "loop" by doubling it back onto itself

2



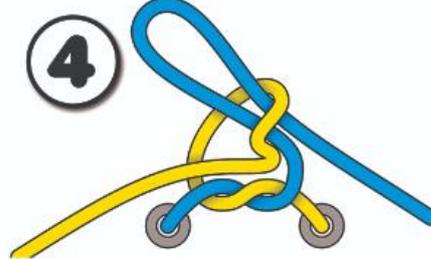
Take the left (yellow) end and pass it around to the right, going behind the right loop

3



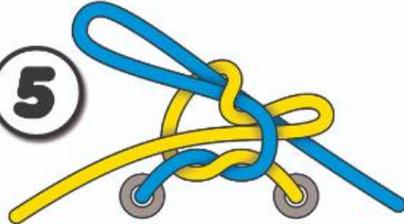
Continue the left (yellow) end around the right loop to end up in front

4



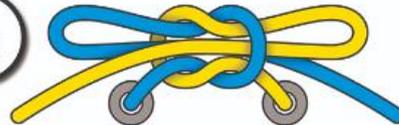
Start to feed the left (yellow) lace into the "hole" that has just been made

5



With the left (yellow) lace now through the "hole", grab hold of both loops and start to pull the knot tight

6



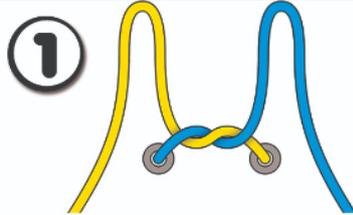
Continue pulling on the loops until the knot is firmly tied

**EASY TIE**

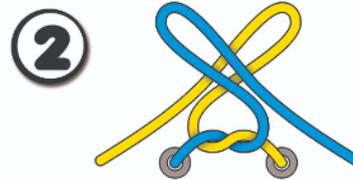
*Shoelaces*

# Task Analysis for Tying Shoelaces: Alternative Method

## Bunny Ears



① Tie a Left-over-Right starting knot. Make both ends into "loops" by doubling them back onto themselves



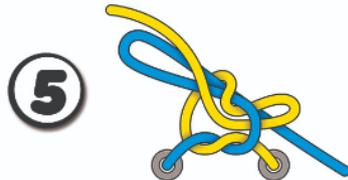
② Cross the two loops over each other so that the right (blue) loop ends up in front and the left (yellow) loop ends up behind



③ Begin to wrap the right (yellow) loop around the left (blue) loop to end up in front



④ Feed the right (yellow) loop into the "hole" that has just been made



⑤ With the right (yellow) loop now through the "hole", grab hold of both loops and start to pull



⑥ Continue pulling on the loops until the knot is firmly tied

**EASY TIE**  
*Shoelaces*

Graphics courtesy of Ian Figgen and reproduced with his permission. Visit Ian's Shoelace site [www.fieggen.com](http://www.fieggen.com)

## Alternatives to Shoelaces

### Xtenex laces ([www.xtenex.com](http://www.xtenex.com))

Elastic laces with knots. When the lace is stretched the knots disappear; when released the knots will keep the shoe tight around the foot.



**Xpand shoelaces** ([www.xpandlaces.com](http://www.xpandlaces.com))

These are another form of elastic laces. Once they have been fitted the person can slip on and off runners or shoes like slip-ons. No need to adjust the laces.



**Lock Laces** ([www.locklaces.com](http://www.locklaces.com))

Another form of elastic lace with a locking mechanism



**Curly Laces** (<http://www.curlylaces.com/>)

These coiled elastic shoelaces never need tying. After threading the laces through, release them at the required pressure. The ends of the laces will coil up and stay in place.



**Greeper Laces** ([www.greeper.com](http://www.greeper.com))

Greeper Laces are designed to keep the laces locked in the correct tightness. The laces are available in two designs, which are suitable for trainers or for shoes.



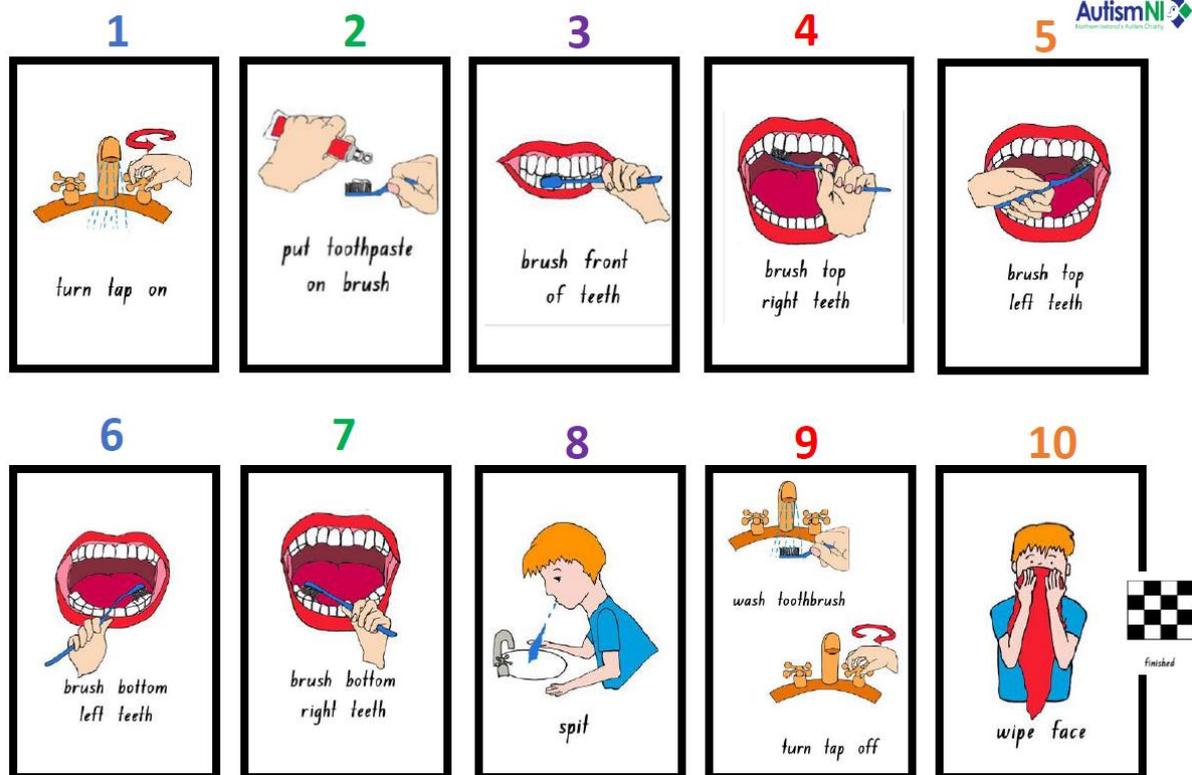
**Hickies** ([www.hickies.eu](http://www.hickies.eu))



Elastic band clips that once fitted the person can slip on and off the runners. They can be set up for different types of fit e.g. loose or tight. Available in multiple colours.

There are lots of other brands available from Amazon and various online stores. Other styles that are targeted towards athletes may also be available in sports shops.

# Task Analysis for Brushing Teeth

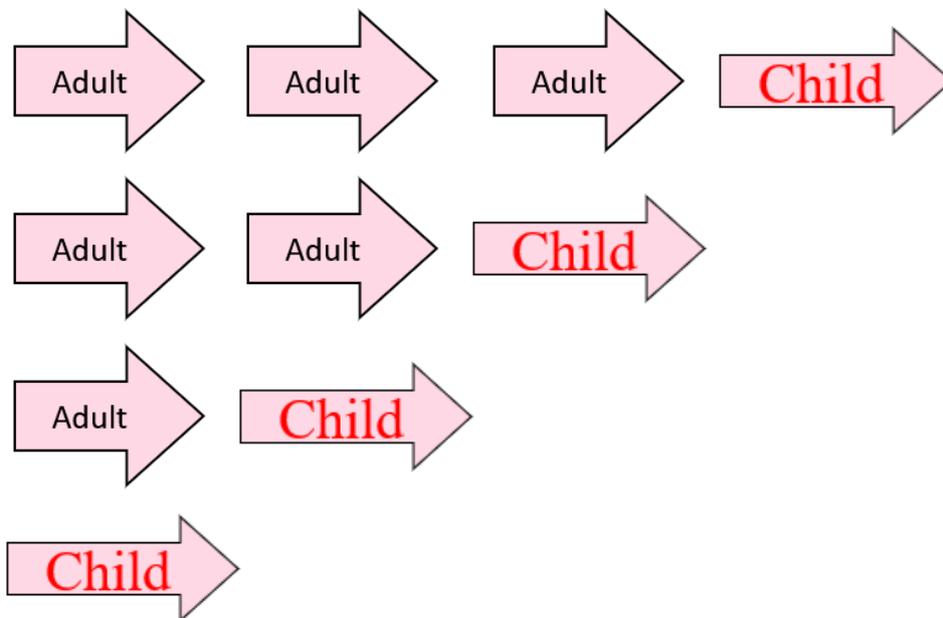


## Task Analysis Videos

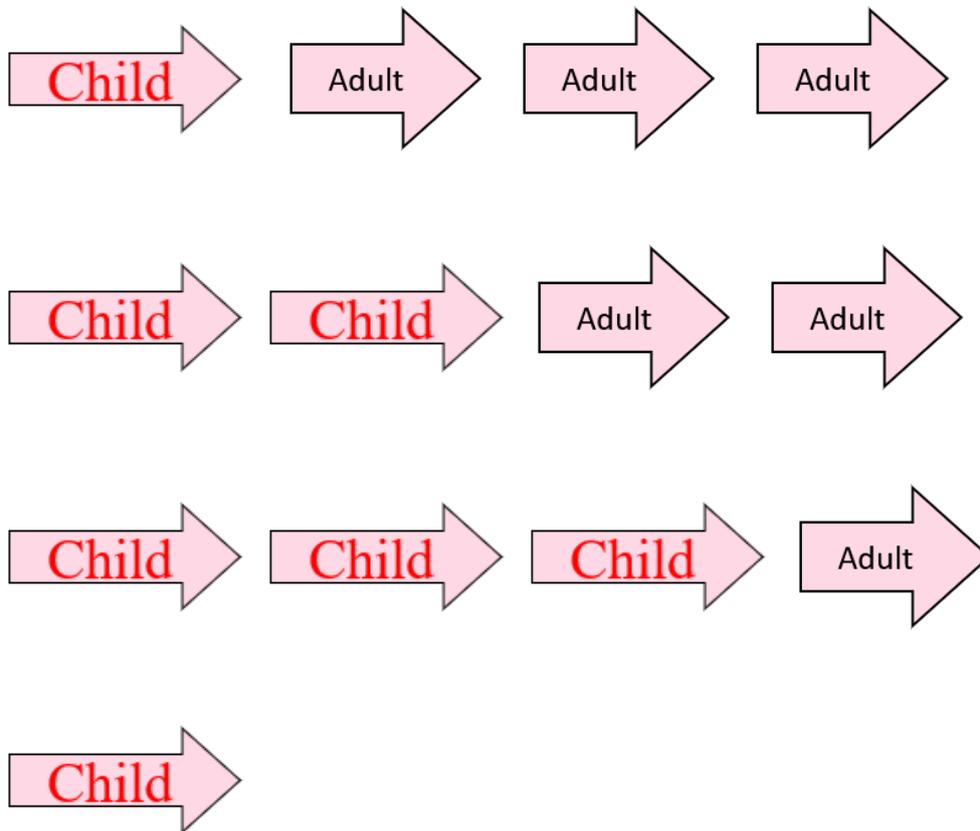
- Cutting with a knife and fork  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIEA3uYu74Y>
- Opening and closing buttons  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjZH1KtUysM>
- Closing a zip  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QaueOn-0pM>
- Tying Shoelaces 4 methods.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TMZVWNDu90>
- Putting on coat Montessori method  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpCNf4oTxxg4>
- Cutting Nails  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzOOSU4B2kw>

## Backward Chaining

- Breaking down a task and teaching the steps in reverse order.
- A parent/caregiver completes steps 1-5 and the child should then complete step 6. When the child is fully comfortable with step 6, they should then progress onto completing steps 5 and 6.
- The aim of backward chaining is for the parent/caregiver to be doing less and less and the child to be continually growing more independent. The child should always complete the final step of the task.



## Forward Chaining



- Breaking down a task and teaching the steps in order.
- The child completes the first step then the adult/caregiver completes the remaining steps. When the child is fully comfortable with step 1, they should then progress onto completing steps 1 & 2. When the child is confident with completing steps 1 & 2 they should go on to complete steps 1, 2 & 3, until eventually the child completes all the steps of the task.
- The aim of forward chaining is for the parent/caregiver to be doing less and less and the child to be continually growing more independent.

# Backward Chaining

## Putting on a Sock:

### Materials:

Begin with a sock that is too large for the child. Gradually work towards a sock the child's size. Talcum powder in the sock may reduce resistance from the sock as it is being put on.

### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

1. Child pulls up sock from just above heel.
2. Child pulls up sock from just below heel.
3. Child pulls up sock after toes have been started in.
4. Child puts on sock after it has been handed to them with the heel in the correct position.
5. Child puts on sock independently.



# Forward Chaining

## Removing a Sock:

### Materials:

Socks

### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Presented in forward chaining. Backward chaining could also be used.

1. Child grasps toe of sock with one hand
2. Child removes sock by pulling the toe of the sock one way and pulling the foot the other way.



### Alternative Method:

### Task analysis:

Presented in forward chaining. Backward chaining may also be used.

1. Child pushes or rolls the sock down as far as possible, using one or two hands or rubbing sock against a mat.
2. Child finishes removing the sock by grasping at the toe and pulling.



# Backward Chaining

## Putting on Pants:

### Materials:

Underwear, shorts, pyjama bottoms, bath suits, trousers. Initially use pants that are too large and with an elastic waistband.

### Position:

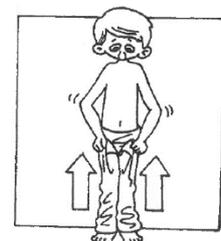
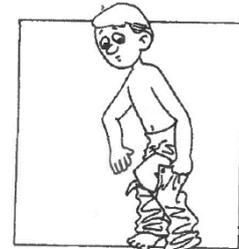
Sitting and standing.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

Note: Put pants on same leg first each time. The routine will make learning easier.

1. Child puts on pants when pulled halfway up bottom.
2. Child pulls on pants when just below bottom.
3. Child pulls on pants when pulled midthigh.
4. Child pulls on pants when pulled to knees.
5. Child puts on pants when one foot is in and the other is started in.
6. Child puts on pants when placed correctly in front of them.
7. Child puts on pants independently.



# Backward Chaining

## Putting on a T-shirt:

### Materials:

Use a t-shirt that is too large for the child. It should have short sleeves and a loose fitting neck.

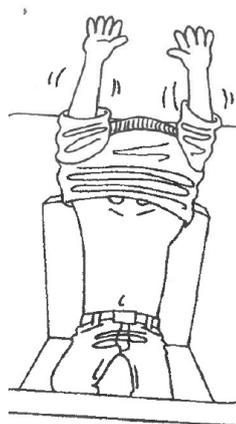
### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

1. Child pulls down t-shirt.
2. Child pulls t-shirt down on neck.
3. Child pushes both arms through sleeve holes (either simultaneously or separately).
4. Child pushes both arms through t-shirt from the bottom to find sleeve hole.
5. Child finds bottom opening of t-shirt.
6. Child puts on t-shirt independently.



# Backward Chaining

## Putting on a T-shirt:

### Materials:

Use a t-shirt that is too large for the child. It should have short sleeves and a loose fitting neck.

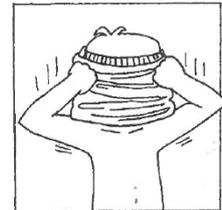
### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

1. Child puts on t-shirt when both arms are through sleeves (head is already in).



2. Child puts on t-shirt when one arm is through and the other is halfway in (head is already in).

3. Child puts on t-shirt when one arm is through and the other hand is at the opening (head is already in).

4. Child puts on t-shirt when one arm is through (head is already in).



5. Child puts on t-shirt when it is over the head and one hand is at sleeve opening.

6. Child puts on t-shirt when placed over head.

7. Child puts on t-shirt when on head.

8. Child puts on t-shirt when placed on lap.

9. Child puts on t-shirt independently.



# Backward Chaining

## Removing a T-shirt:

### Materials:

Use a t-shirt that is too large for the child. It should have short sleeves and a loose fitting neck.

### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

1. Child removes t-shirt from head.
2. Child removes t-shirt from neck.
3. Child removes t-shirt with one arm in and one arm out.
4. Child removes t-shirt with one arm in and one arm half out.
5. Child removes t-shirt when both arms are in sleeves and t-shirt has been pulled up at the shoulders.
6. Child removes t-shirt.



# Backward Chaining

## Removing a T-shirt:

### Materials:

Use a t-shirt that is too large for the child. It should have short sleeves and a loose fitting neck.

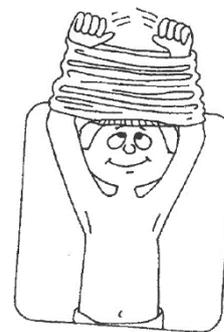
### Position:

Sitting, well balanced.

### Task Analysis:

Backward chaining. Adult completes the first steps, leaving the last step for the child to complete and over time the child completes more of the steps. The last step here is no.1.

1. Child removes t-shirt from arms.
2. Child removes t-shirt from head.
3. Child pulls crossed arms over head.
4. Child grasps t-shirt on sides with crossed arms.
5. Child removes t-shirt independently.



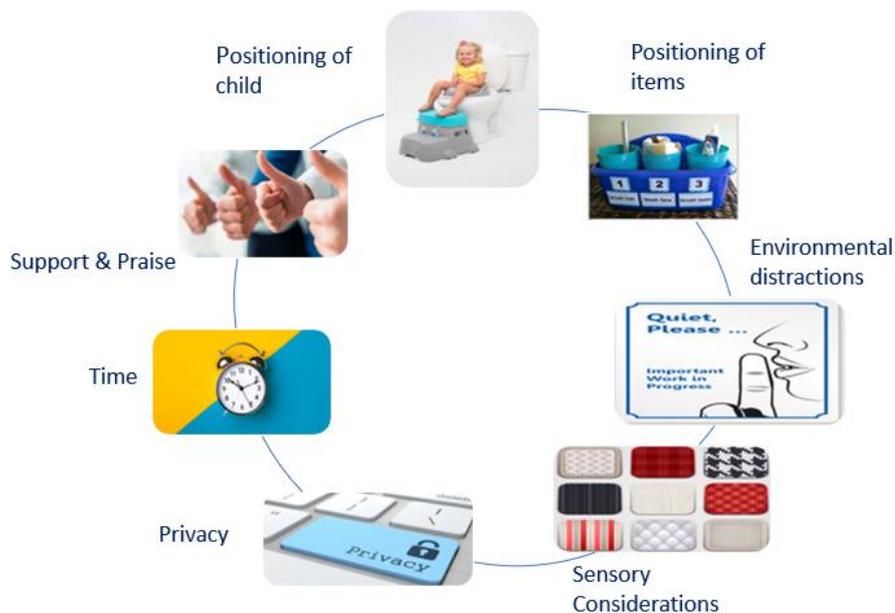
## Backward Chaining Videos

- Putting on Socks  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3G8c\\_o8qnpM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3G8c_o8qnpM)
- Tying Shoelaces  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9b1lhi28m9o>

## Adapting the task

- Sometimes small changes to the task can make it more manageable.
- Use bigger objects to practice.
- Make objects steadier.
- Make boundaries clearer.
- Specially adapted equipment or techniques
- Sensory considerations.
- Be mindful of safety. For example using a safe knife and safe peeler for preparing food.  
<https://www.thecoolfoodschool.ie/shop/best-seller-kiddies-food-kutter-and-safety-food-peeler>

## Adapting the physical Environment



## Levels of Support & Fading Support

### Hand over Hand Prompting:

You are physically moving the person's hands to complete the task.

### Partial Physical Prompt:

Providing minimal physical guidance, such as touching an elbow to guide the person in the right direction to complete the task.

### Modelling:

Demonstrating the task for the person.

### Verbal:

Providing verbal direction to the person to help them to achieve their task.

### Gestural:

Using a gesture, such as pointing or nodding to show the person what to do.

### Visual:

Using a picture or video to show the person what to do.

- Video showing fading out of prompts

[https://www.google.com/search?q=fading+out+prompts&rlz=1C1CHBD\\_enIE1022IE1022&source=lnms&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwixn66FpsT7AhXJhFwKHVUmCqsQ\\_AUoA3oECAEQBQ&biw=1266&bih=593&dpr=1.5#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:26b802ec,vid:dB2MM\\_TfSA](https://www.google.com/search?q=fading+out+prompts&rlz=1C1CHBD_enIE1022IE1022&source=lnms&tbm=vid&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwixn66FpsT7AhXJhFwKHVUmCqsQ_AUoA3oECAEQBQ&biw=1266&bih=593&dpr=1.5#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:26b802ec,vid:dB2MM_TfSA)

# Teaching and Trialling

- Use what has already worked in the past
- Modelling
- Backward Chaining
- 1:1 Instruction
- Visuals
- Social Stories
- Songs & Rhymes

## Brushing Teeth: Motivational Videos from TV programmes

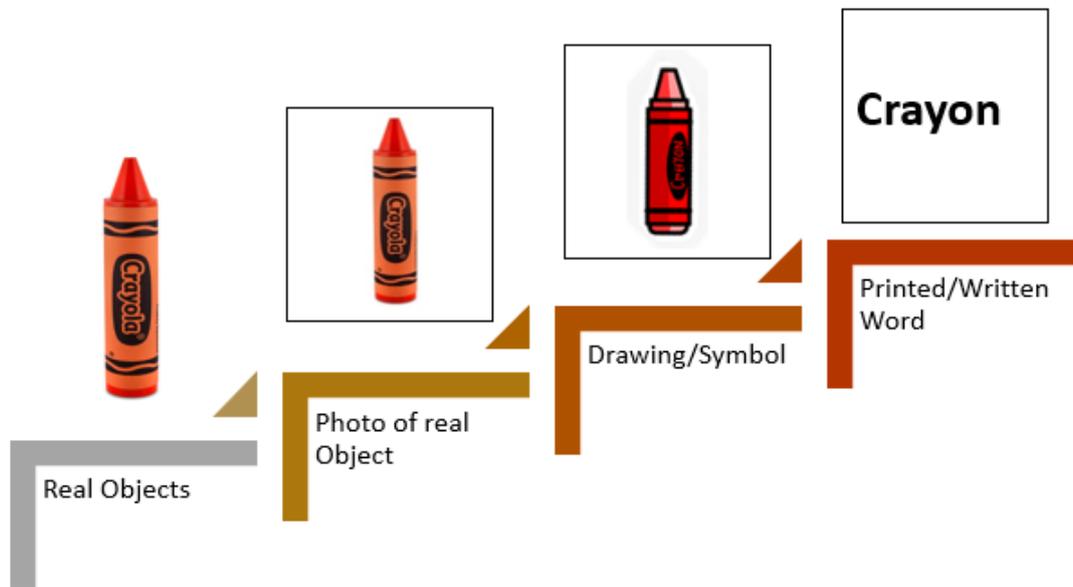
- ✓ Peppa Pig  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8E6jKFHD9Vk>
- ✓ Blippi Tooth Brushing Song  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ku-ForS6G3I>
- ✓ Sesame Street Brushing Teeth Song  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxMrtK-kYnE>

## Strategies: Use of visuals, checklists, apps or calendars

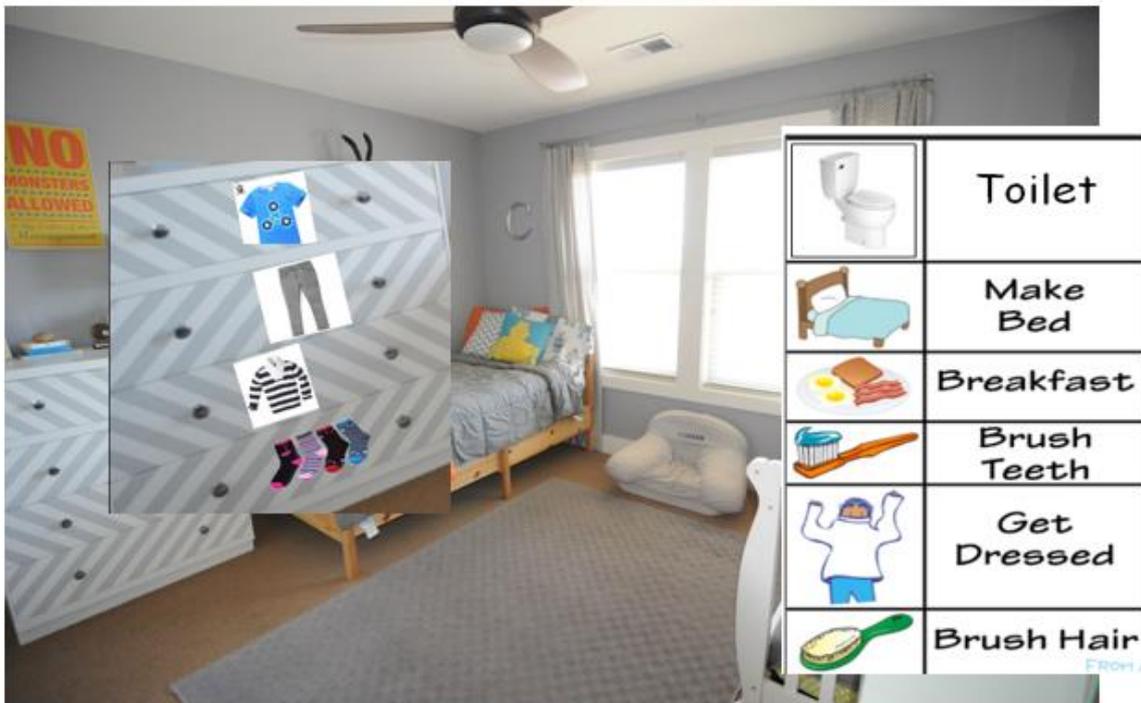
- Visuals are helpful even where language & understanding are good.
- Focus Attention
- Organise and structure task.
- Reduce dependence
- Motivation!



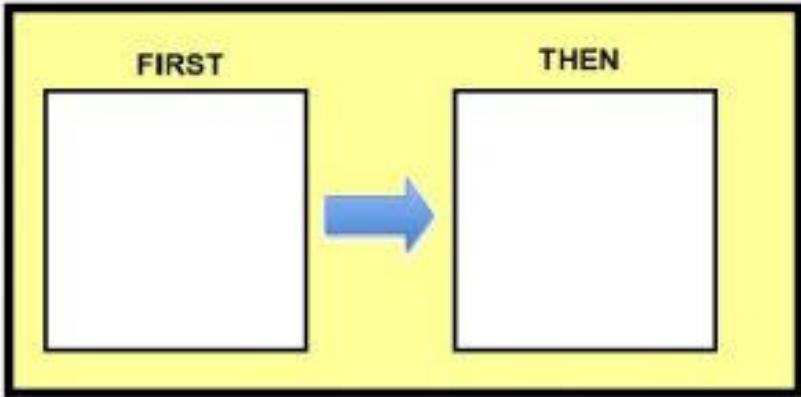
# Types of Visuals



# Bedroom with Visuals



# Visuals



Let's get dressed

underwear      shorts      T-shirt      socks      shoes

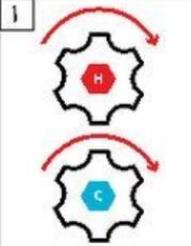
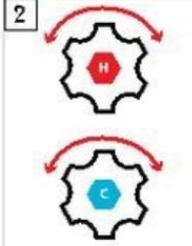
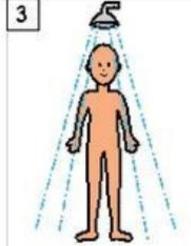
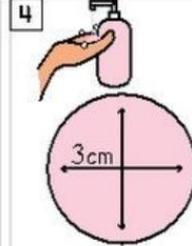
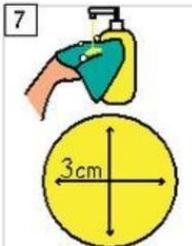
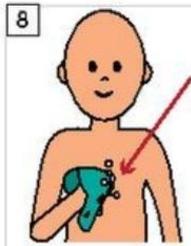
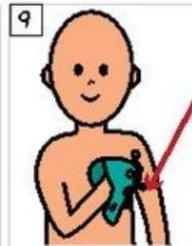
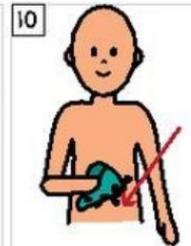
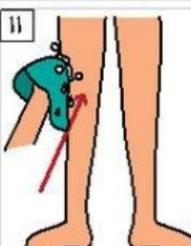
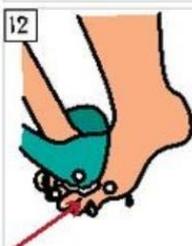
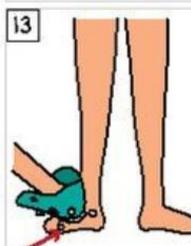
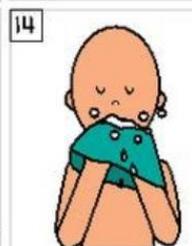
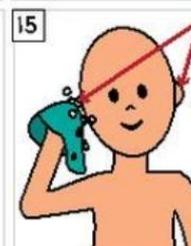
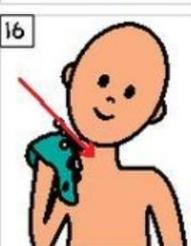
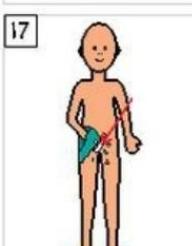
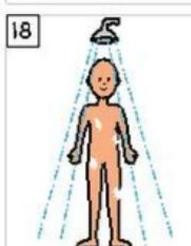
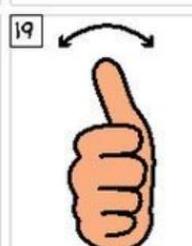
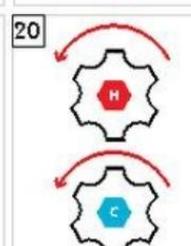
A row of five boxes, each containing an illustration and a label: underwear, shorts, T-shirt, socks, and shoes. To the left is a larger box with the text "Let's get dressed" and an illustration of a person putting on a red hat.



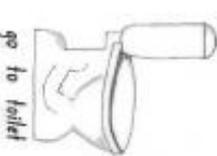
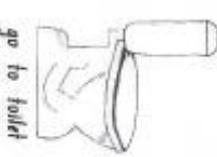
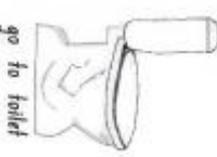
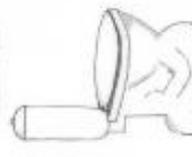
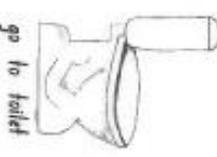
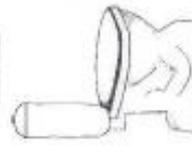
# Mini Token Economy Board

# Visuals for the Shower that you can print and laminate.

## Washing your body in the shower

 <p>1</p> <p>Turn on taps</p>	 <p>2</p> <p>Adjust temperature</p>	 <p>3</p> <p>Wet body</p>	 <p>4</p> <p>3cm squirt of Shampoo or conditioner</p>	 <p>5</p> <p>Wash hair</p>
 <p>6</p> <p>Rinse hair</p>	 <p>7</p> <p>3cm squirt of soap</p>	 <p>8</p> <p>Wash chest</p>	 <p>9</p> <p>Wash arms</p>	 <p>10</p> <p>Wash stomach</p>
 <p>11</p> <p>Wash legs</p>	 <p>12</p> <p>Wash toes</p>	 <p>13</p> <p>Wash feet</p>	 <p>14</p> <p>Wash face</p>	 <p>15</p> <p>Wash ears</p>
 <p>16</p> <p>Wash neck</p>	 <p>17</p> <p>Wash genital area and bottom</p>	 <p>18</p> <p>Rinse soap off body</p>	 <p>19</p> <p>Finished</p>	 <p>20</p> <p>Turn off taps</p>

## Visuals for Toileting. You could choose visuals for the steps your child is working on to print and laminate.

 sit down	 wipe bottom	 lid down	
 pants down	 get toilet paper	 pants up	
 pants down	 do wee	 undies up	
 lid up	 do poo	 put paper in toilet	 push button
 go to toilet	 go to toilet use toilet paper	 toilet	 finished
 go to toilet	 go to toilet use toilet paper	 toilet	 finished
 go to toilet	 wash hands	 toilet	
 go to toilet		 toilet	 finished

# Visuals for Toileting. You could choose visuals for the steps your child is working on to print and laminate.

 <p>lid down push button</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>push button</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>lid down</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>pants up</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>
 <p>undies up</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>put paper in toilet</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>wipe bottom</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>get toilet paper</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>
 <p>do wee</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>stand close</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>do wee</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>do poo</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>
 <p>sit down</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>undies down</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>pants down</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>	 <p>lid up</p> <p>© Visual Aids for Learning www.visualaidsonline.com</p>

## Strategies for Wiping

- Consider wet wipes versus cheaper toilet paper. Wet wipes may offer an easier and more effective method of wiping. Cheaper toilet paper may offer more tactile “feedback” than softer more expensive toilet paper.
- Agree on a certain number of sheets to wipe to help the child to organise how much paper to pull off.
- The sense of touch plays an important role. Encourage the child to develop better awareness of their bottom by encouraging them to use a washcloth during a bath or shower and have a go at washing themselves in a manner mimicking the wiping action with the toilet paper.
- Play games with dolls or action figures- put Nutella or shaving foam on the doll/figure’s bottom and encourage the child to wipe the bottom until it is clean.
- Fill a bumbag with familiar items such as a key, coin, peg, teaspoon. Put the bumbag on the child and have it loosely positioned around the waist with the bag hanging over the bottom. Sit the child sideways on a chair so that the child’s bottom is hanging off the side. Call out one item at a time and see if they can find it in the bag behind them using their wiping hand.
- Place large stickers or rolled up balls of tape on the back of the child’s clothes and have them practice reaching with their wiping hand to take them off.
- Show the child how to use toilet paper with the following consistent sequence:
  - ✓ Pull down the paper to correct level.
  - ✓ Tear off paper and roll in to hand.
  - ✓ Reach around to the back of the bottom.
  - ✓ Wipe once in a front to back motion.
  - ✓ Check if the paper is clean.
  - ✓ Drop paper in toilet.
  - ✓ Repeat sequence until the toilet paper is clean.
- Practice wiping clean other surfaces using toilet paper, such as wiping felt pen off a white board, cleaning a table.

## Strategies for knowing your location in a Supermarket.

- If the young person has a phone, they can use their phone to take a picture of the aisle that they are in and send the picture to their parent who is calling them to know where they are.
- When you call your child ask them to tell you what they see in front of them. The young person can look at the items on the aisle that they are in and can tell the parent who has called them what items they are looking at.
- The young person can look up and see if there is a large sign with an aisle number or description of what items are in the aisle. You can take a photograph of each of the aisle signs to show your child before you go to the supermarket to make them familiar with the signs so when you need to find out where in the supermarket your child will know where to look up for the sign of the aisle they are in when you call them.
- If your child does not have a phone and you part ways in the supermarket. If your child has a card that says I am lost bring me to customer services. Then the child can show this card to a staff member and you can meet your child there.
- The young person can carry a card indicating that they need help describing their location. This card can be shown to a staff member who can then advise the young person of their location in the supermarket. The young person can then tell you over the phone where they are located.



# Mastering the Art of Offering Controlled Choices

**WHY**  
is it important to give children the power to make choices?



Choices allow children to partake in the decision-making process.



Thus increasing engagement and decreasing problem behavior.

## Choice Types:



This OR That?



How to do it?



How many?



Who will help?



What color?



The **KEY** is to offer a limited menu of choices, all of which you are ok with.



Offering a choice prevents negotiation and will help avoid a power struggle.



**AVOID:**

Giving choices that are not available.  
Giving an empty threat like canceling a major holiday.

## What does this sound like?



Would you like to wear your shoes or boots today?



Would you like to walk to the car fast or slow?



Would you like 2 or 3 cookies for dessert?



Would you like mom or dad to read you a book?



Would you like to wear your red or blue shirt today?

## Making Rewards Effective

Be clear about the behaviour you want

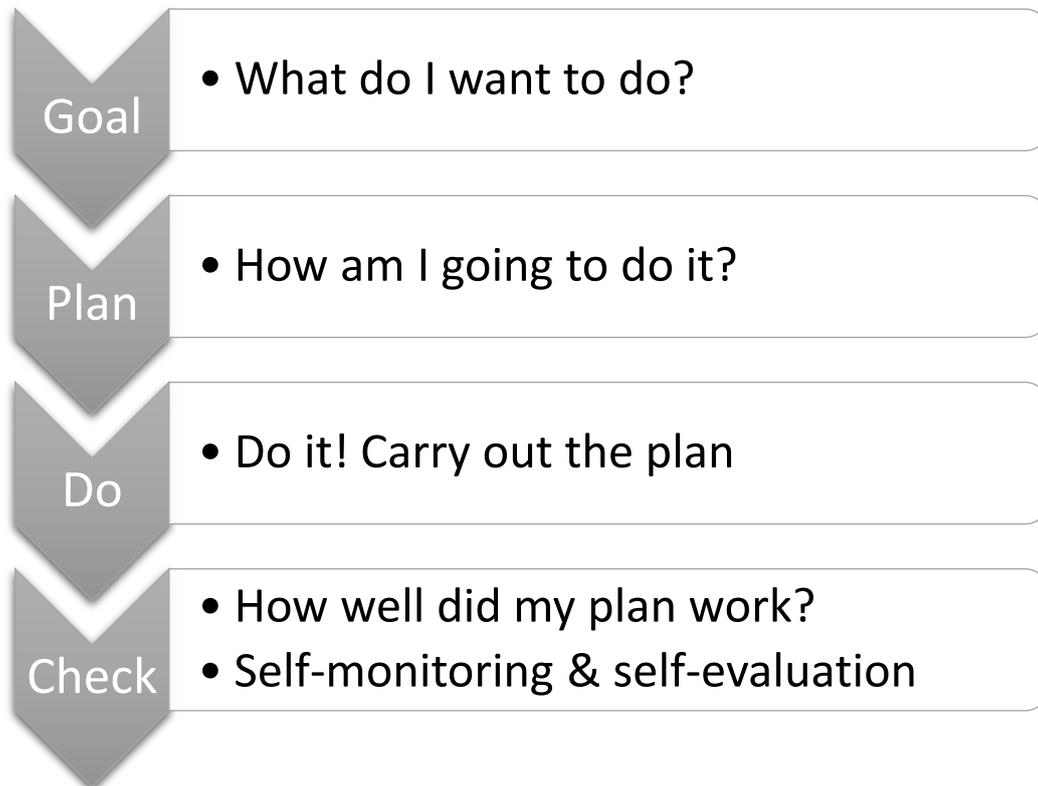
Use lots of praise, attention, encouragement

Rewards are natural part of routine.

Rewards are planned in advance and given for agreed behaviour – tokens/colourful reward chart.

Start small- behaviour that is easy to achieve.

## Guiding Strategy: Problem solving Framework from CO-OP Approach



### Overview of the CO-OP Approach

This is an approach that is used with children and adults with motor coordination difficulties.

#### The main objectives in the CO-OP are:

- 1) Skill acquisition in the child's chosen tasks
- 2) Development of Cognitive Strategies
- 3) Generalisation and transfer of learned skills and strategies.

The steps to the CO-OP approach include client chosen goals, dynamic performance analysis, cognitive strategy use, guided discovery, enabling principles, parent/teacher/significant other involvement and intervention format.

Generally, the CO-OP approach is GOAL – PLAN – DO – CHECK.

Step 1: The child along with the parents/teacher determine a goal or task that needs to be accomplished. The therapist performs evaluations and assessments to determine if the goal is feasible.

Step 2: Create a plan together to reach the goal. To begin, the therapist performs a task analysis of the child performing the skill. The child can explore different strategies such as body position, attention to the current task, modifications, self talk, self monitoring, etc.

Step 3: Carry out the plan with the child using the planned strategies to accomplish the task.

Step 4: Check the plan. How well did it all work? What was successful? What can I change? What needs improvement? This can be done through self-interrogation, self-monitoring, self-observation and self-evaluation. With permission the child could be recorded completing the task to give the child the opportunity to see how they are completing the task and where they may be going wrong.

### **Some Key Features of the CO-OP Approach:**

- 1) **Client Chosen Goals:** The goals are set in collaboration with the child and great care is taken to ensure that the goals are the ones that the child wants to, needs to, or is expected to acquire.
- 2) **Dynamic Performance Analysis:** This is an observation-based process of identifying performance problems or performance breakdown. The following are important for performance:

Does the child want to the activity?

Does the child generally know what to do?

Is the performance competent?

Where in the performance are the breakdowns?

For each breakdown:

Does the child know what to do?

Can the child do it?

Does the child have the ability?

Are the occupational demands/supports appropriate?

Are the environmental demands/supports appropriate?

**3) Cognitive Strategy Use:** In CO-OP the child is taught to think their way through a performance problem, to identify a strategy to solve that problem and then to implement it. The use of talk and self-talk are important.

**4) Guided Discovery:**

**One thing at a time-** if there are multiple performance problems, focus on one at a time.

**Ask Don't Tell-** Ask just the right question to the child that will guide the child to discover the answer to their performance problem. Guidelines to consider when posing the question include:

Keep the questions focused on the performance problem

Avoid yes- no questions

Be sure the child has the required task knowledge to answer the question

Use closed questions to focus attention

Use open ended questions to promote critical thinking

Use choice questions if open ended questions are too difficult

Be sure to allow 'wait time' for thinking to process

Include clarifying questions, demands and statements

Periodically summarize what has and what has not been dealt with and/or resolved

Use compare/contrast questions

Use experiments

**Coach Don't Adjust-**Questioning can be used in the PLAN phase to help the child identify the domain specific strategies that support performance. Modelling in combination with questioning can also be used to help identify adjustments that would support performance.

**Make It Obvious-** Sometimes a child does not learn from just watching it might be necessary to draw attention to the aspect that the child is having difficulty with by exaggerating that part when modelling the task. Questions are posed so that the answer is obvious and coached adjustments are planned to have dramatic outcomes.

### **5) Enabling Principles:**

**Make it Fun-** Be willing to make obvious mistakes to help model the idea of checking and amending the plan. This can minimise the negativity around having a plan that fails. Be willing to exaggerate movements to show parts of the performance that the child is having difficulty with.

**Promote Learning-** Reinforcement: The major intrinsic reinforcer is the repeated success the child experiences by discovering successful PLANS. External reinforcers can include: Give praise and make it obvious for example: that was great when you bent your knees. Giving feedback as part of the checking the plan process that describes the performance in a realistic positive statement.

**Direct Teaching-** When the child does not have sufficient task knowledge to perform the task and it cannot be discovered, direct teaching is used.

**Modelling-** Both successful plans and unsuccessful plans are modelled to help the child understand the relationship between strategy use and outcome.

**Shaping-** When a skill is difficult to learn it is simplified as it is introduced to the child. For example starting to rollerblade on carpet or using a larger or softer ball to catch then gradually increasing the complexity until the skill is acquired.

**Prompting-** The prompt can be visual, verbal or physical. If the prompts being used are not readily available in all environments that the child is performing the skill, it is important to quickly fade the use of the prompts.

**Fading-** If prompts or assistance are used to support learning the skill, they are faded as the child acquires competence. Fading is gradual.

**Chaining-** Chaining is used when the performance analysis shows that the child is having difficulty with the sequence of steps in a multi-step skill, or can perform parts of the skill

but not others, or cannot put them all together. The individual steps are worked on first, then chained together.

- 6) Parent involvement:** The primary role of the parent is to support the child in the acquisition of new skills and to facilitate the generalisation and transfer of these. The therapist shares information with the parents to enable them to support the child's use of the newly learned skill and strategies in environments beyond the intervention sessions.

#### Videos on CO-OP Approach:

- Cognitive Orientation to Daily Occupational Performance Overview  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14b4DtCSPoE>
- Ted Talk by an OT about the Co-op  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Au6jwjTB1WI&t=597s>