

# Clothing for individual care needs



Childrens Occupational Therapy Service  
Bridge Park Plaza  
Bridge Park Road,  
Thurmaston  
Leicester  
LE4 8PQ  
Tel: 0116 295 2495

## What is this leaflet about?

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The Children's Occupational Therapy Services team helps children with disabilities live more productive and enjoyable lives. It helps them to become more independent in the things they need and want to do.

Some children may require special or altered clothing in order to accommodate their needs. This is a leaflet to offer general advice to parents and carers.

## Clothes for children with gastrostomies

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- Loose fitting or low-waist clothes will give easier access to the gastrostomy site and may be more comfortable.
- Vests with openings over the belly button, which give easier access to gastrostomy tubes, are available from specialist clothing retailers.

## Clothes for children who have difficulty moving their arms and legs

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- Baggy clothes and stretchy fabrics such as cotton with lycra, are easier to put on and take off.
- You could adapt clothing by adding extra zips, making existing fastenings longer or adding elasticised panels to key areas such as elbows or seams.

## Clothes which can be helpful when using the toilet

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- Loose fitting clothes, elasticised waistbands and clothes with Velcro fastenings can make it easier to get dressed and undressed.
- All-in-one popper vests can help to keep continence pads in place.
- A zip on the trouser leg can give easier access to catheters.
- Side fastening trousers open wider and can give quicker access.

## **Clothes which help with sensitive skin or sore areas**

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- Flat back seams and seam-free clothing reduce the likelihood of pressure areas developing.
- Clothes which reduce friction can also help, for example smooth, non-crease materials such as silk, silk blends and elastics or lycra.

## **Clothes for smaller children**

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- A high-street alterations service will be able to alter the size of clothes.
- Pre-school clothing companies supply small sizes of school wear.

## **Clothes for users of wheelchairs or seating systems**

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- Ponchos and capes reduce unnecessary pressure and bulk from layers of clothing.
- Leg covers may help children who sit for long periods of time to keep warm.
- Waterproof cuffs can help keep clothes and skin dry for users of self-propelled wheelchairs. Hand and joystick covers can also protect against wet and cold weather.

## Tips for helping children become independent with their dressing

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- Practise with large buttons which are easier to fasten.
- Zips with easy to grab tags may be easier to manage than buttons. Tags can be made easier to grab by adding ribbon or zip toggles.
- Consider altering buttons to zip or Velcro fastenings for children who cannot use buttons.
- Pull-on clothing, such as tee-shirts and jogging bottoms, eliminate the need for fastenings.
- A tag or coloured mark in the back of clothes can help children put-on clothes the right way around.
- If you would like more detailed advice about dressing skills speak to your Occupational Therapist or read our leaflet "Let me: dress myself".

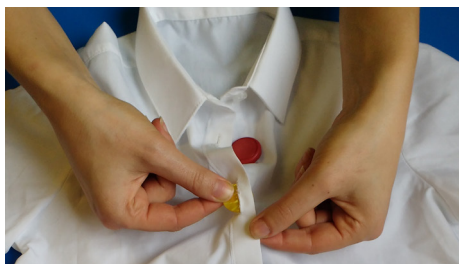
## Tips for helping learn dressing skills



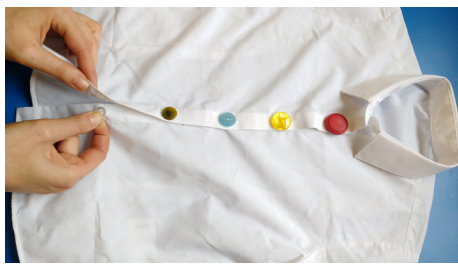
Teach that labels usually go at the back.



Use pictures to show the correct order for dressing.



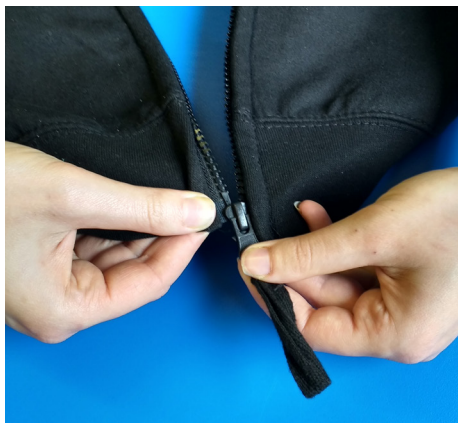
Demonstrate step-by-step how to fasten buttons.



Practise with large buttons first.



Practise with larger clothes that are easier to put on.



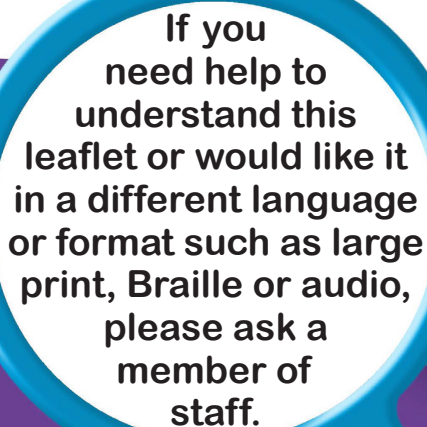
Break down tasks, for example, when learning zip fastening, you might put the two ends together before the child pulls-up the zip.

## Who supplies specialist clothes?

It may benefit you to try a variety of different styles of high street clothing before considering more specialist clothing. You can alter clothes yourself, or you might consider using a high-street alterations service, to make changes which you know will benefit your child. This could include changing fastenings, shortening clothing and adding elasticised panels.

There are a number of specialist clothing manufacturers. Below are examples of companies and the types of clothes they sell, but this list is not exhaustive. Contact your local Disabilities Living Centre for a complete up-to-date list.

- **Bassetlaw Fashion Services**, Canalside Workshops, Leverton Road, Retford, Nottingham, DN22 0DR. Website: [www.bassetlawfashionservices.org.uk](http://www.bassetlawfashionservices.org.uk). Tel: 01777 860 206. (Broad range of adapted clothing).
- **Rackety's Ltd**, Unit 16, Town Yard Industrial Park, Leek Staffordshire, ST13 8BF. Website: [www.racketys.com](http://www.racketys.com). Tel: 01538 381430. (Popper vests, clothes with openings over belly buttons, leg warmers, outdoor wear for wheelchair users).
- **Kozee Komforts**, Komfort House, Boundary Rd, Bessingby Industrial Estate, Bridlington, YO16 4SD. Tel: 01262 409200. (Capes and wheelchair accessories for older children and young adults).
- **Cioch Outdoor Clothing**, Struan, Isle of Skye, Scotland IV56 8FA. Website: [www.cioch-direct.co.uk](http://www.cioch-direct.co.uk). Tel: 01470 572707. (Mail order made to measure outdoor clothes, waterproof jackets and trousers).
- **Able2Wear**, 8 Railway Court, Station Rd, Lennoxton, Scotland, G66 7LL. Website: [www.able2wear.com](http://www.able2wear.com). Tel: 0141 775 3738. (Waterproofs, ponchos, fleece ponchos, waterproof cuffs, hand and joystick cover for wheelchairs, drop front trousers).



**If you  
need help to  
understand this  
leaflet or would like it  
in a different language  
or format such as large  
print, Braille or audio,  
please ask a  
member of  
staff.**

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