

## TODDLER - UNDRESSING AND DRESSING: ROUTINES

The grasp-and-pull hand movement used by the infant and mobile infant in undressing and dressing prepares the toddler for greater participation in these activities now. The toddler adds to the movement repertoire the ability to push. The toddler pushes nearly any and everything.

The toddler's increased motor coordination and development of undressing and dressing skills result in a balance of skills that make both undressing and dressing of equal levels of difficulty.

### **Undressing:**

When hats and mittens are to be removed the adult releases the snaps, ties, etc. that secure the clothing. The adult assists in the clothing removal only as the child requires assistance. The adult guides the material around any obstruction while the child is pulling.

Clothing of the torso (shirt for the upper torso and pants for the lower torso) must come across a second body part: the arms or the legs. The adult assists as required:

1. to guide the child through the sequence
2. to assist the child only as required

### **Undressing: Adult Assistance**

As the adult experiences increasingly cooperative participation in the undressing process the adult allows the child to take over all aspects of undressing.

Adult assistance in the undressing process requires the adult:

1. to observe throughout the undressing process
2. to verbalize the steps in the undressing process

3. to assist slowly to allow for the child's increasing participation
4. to allow the child to utilize all her undressing skills

### **The Arm/Hand**

To assist the child in removing a shirt the adult guides the child to:

Reach under the shirt and through the arm hole with her hand.

Grasp the elbow of her other arm.

Move her elbow toward her ribs.

Release her elbow.

Bring her hand from under the shirt.

Grasp the cuff of the sleeve with her hand.

Pull the sleeve cuff across her midline.

Her arm is released from the sleeve.

Repeat this undressing process with the other sleeve.

The adult only assists as required by the child.

### **The Head**

To continue to assist the child in removing a shirt the adult guides the child to:

Gather the front of the shirt to the front of the neck opening.

Hold the shirt at the hole gatherings with both hands.

Pull the shirt out and around the face.

Ease the shirt over the ears.

Pull the shirt off the head.

The adult only assists as required by the child.

## **The Legs/Feet**

To assist the child in removing pants the adult guides the child to:

Take a standing position.

Release fasteners at the waist.

Grasp the side seam at the waist with one hand on each side. Gently expand the waist opening over the diaper area.

Gently pull the pants down.

Take a sitting position.

Grasp and pull one of the cuffs of the pants.

Pull the pant leg off.

Repeat the process with the other pant leg cuff.

Pull the pant leg off.

The adult only assists as required by the child.

## **Dressing: Adult Assistance**

T-shirts, shirts, blouses, dresses, sweater and coats are clothing items that go on the upper body torso and upper body appendages. The adult assists in the clothes dressing only as the child requires assistance. The adult guides the material around any obstruction while the child is pulling.

Clothing of the torso (shirt for the upper torso and pants for the lower torso) must come across a second body part: the arms or the legs. The adult assists as required:

1. to guide the child through the sequence
2. to assist the child only as required

## **The Head**

To assist the child in putting on a shirt the adult guides the child to:

Gather the front of the shirt to neck opening with two hands.

Place the gathered front of the shirt to the crown of the head.

Hold the shirt neck opening at the sides of the head with two hands.

Pull the shirt neck opening down to the neck.

Release the hands

The adult only assists as required by the child.

### **The Arms/Hands**

To continue to assist in putting on a shirt the adult guides the child to:

Reach under the shirt and through the arm hole with her hand.

Straighten the arm out through the sleeve.

Repeat this process for the other sleeve.

The adult only assists as required by the child.

### **The Legs/Feet**

To assist the child in putting on pants the adult guides the child to:

Lay the pants flat on the floor front side up.

Take a sitting position at the waist of the pants.

Grasp the waist of the pants

Ease the feet into the waist opening.

Ease the feet through the pant legs.

Release the hands at the waist of the pants.

Grasp the cuff of one pant leg with two hands.

Pull the cuff over the foot and to the ankle.

Release the hands.

Grasp the cuff of the other pant leg with two hands.

Pull the cuff over the foot and to the ankle.

Release the hands.

Stand up.

Grasp the waist of the pants.

Pull the pant waist to the body waist.

The adult fastens the pants at the waist as required.

The adult only assists as required by the child.

## **TODDLER - UNDRESSING AND DRESSING: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL**

The emotional issues for the child from birth to three years old are trust and autonomy. Undressing and dressing for the toddler provides a unique activity for reassurance that the adult is available and responsive when assistance is needed thereby building trust. However, the adult is respectful of the child's need for independent activity which leads to autonomy. Both trust and autonomy are developed in the undressing and dressing process.

The issue of trust shifts from trust of environment and adults to trust of self and one's competence. This shift of trust to self allows for the child to move to autonomy.

In terms of attachment, the child needs to experience a secure and reliable attachment experience with the adult, while not experiencing an overbearing adult presence. Again, dressing and undressing provides the child with experiences of attachment.

Increasingly the child recognizes other children and their needs. The emergence of empathetic responses are observed and can find expression in assisting other children with undressing and dressing.

## TODDLER - UNDRESSING AND DRESSING: LANGUAGE

Language in the form of sentence structure is modeled. The basic subject, predicate and prepositional phrase are used. The adult names clothing, the activity, and the body parts during the undressing and dressing sequence:

<b>Clothing</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Body Part</b>
"The hat	is coming	off your head."
"The pants	are coming	down your legs."
"The socks	are coming	off your feet."

The adult names the body part, the activity, and the clothing during the undressing and dressing sequence:

<b>Body Part</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Clothing</b>
"Your arm	is going	through the coat sleeve."
"Your foot	is going	into the sock."
"Your leg	is going	into the pant leg."

This sentence structure format is encouraged throughout the undressing and dressing process. The verbalization needs to focus upon the concrete task at hand: undressing and dressing. The verbal engagement is to be conversational with eye contact as appropriate.

Language in the form of sequencing and of giving verbal cues is given during the process in the undressing and dressing procedure, also. The toddler is increasingly conscious of the undressing and dressing process. The child participates and anticipates the sequence especially if the adult poses the sequence in terms of questions.

“Can you show me how you take off your...?”

Pause to allow the child to respond.

If the child requires assistance ask, “May I help you ...?”

Pause to allow the child to respond.

When the child assists in the process say, “Thank you.”

When the adult assists in the process have the child say, “Thank you.”

When the child accomplishes an aspect of undressing or dressing acknowledge the effort by saying, “You put on your coat.”

## **TWO YEAR OLD - UNDRESSING AND DRESSING: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Clothes are selected for health and safety.

The clothes selected by the adult matches the changing developmental needs of the two year old which are parallel to the toddler.

The child walks, runs and jumps with balance and equilibrium.

Movement is a sensitive period. Clothing is selected to allow for maximum movement.

Clothing that restricts or binds is avoided.

Notice the fasteners on the garments. The fasteners need to be well attached so that they do not fall off or become pried off. Avoid fasteners that might rub or bruise the skin.

Notice decorations that may become unattached and create a choking hazard.

Notice decorations and ties that may create a choking or entanglement hazard.

Shoe and other feet covering have soles that are non-skid to reduce falling and tripping.

Avoid irritants in clothes detergents that could cause skin rashes.

## TWO YEAR OLD - UNDRESSING AND DRESSING: THE CLOTHING

Clothes are selected for health and safety, for ease of undressing and dressing, and for optimal movement. The fiber content of the clothes allows for durability and ease of cleaning.

The child assists in selecting clothing that is purchased. The child assists in selecting clothing each day to wear.

The head, arms and legs openings are large. The clothing that does require pulling over the head have large openings to allow for the child to independently undress and dress.

Washing clothes in non-scented soap with no additives during the washing or drying process diminishes allergic reactions to the child's skin.

The following clothing items are analyzed:

**T-shirt:** Select T-shirts with large head and arm openings, and loose around the waist.

**Shirt:** Select shirts with front button opening.  
Select pullover shirts with large neck holes.

**Pants:** Select pants with large, elastic waist for ease in toileting.  
Select designs for maximum movement.  
Avoid pants that are belted or snapped.  
Avoid overalls.

**Shorts:** See "Pants."

**Dresses:** Select dresses with large head hole, large arm holes, full at chest, and loose at waist.

Select designs for maximum movement.

Avoid ribbons or other decorations that may dangle into the toilet bowl.

Avoid decorations that could come off and choke (buttons).

Avoid fasteners and small buttons too difficult for the child to attempt.

**Hat:** Select hats with ear covering for cold or windy weather.

Select hats large enough for head of a two year old.

Select hats with brims.

**Shoes:** Select shoes with soft, flexible soles.

Select shoes with velcro closures.

Avoid shoes with smooth, slippery soles.

Avoid overly structured shoes such as cowboy boots and hiking boots.

**Jacket:** Check the zipper for ease in holding the tab, in slipping the glide into the slot, and in pulling the zipper up.

Check how high under the chin the zipper goes.

Avoid zippers so high as to scrap the neck or chin.

Check sleeve length.

Avoid toggle buttons with loops.

Hood with velcro fastener.

Select waist and hip length jacket.

**Snowsuit:** Avoid