



## **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY TREATMENT PROGRAMME**

### **Dressing**

*Dressing can be very challenging e.g. tying laces, doing buttons, getting clothes the right way round etc. It requires lots of different skills e.g. dexterity, balance, movement planning, spatial awareness*

### **Pre-Dressing Skills**

- Body awareness: for increasing body awareness, name parts of the body and use songs, games, books that name parts of the body
- Balance: if maintaining standing balancing is difficult, sit on the floor or a chair or stand next to the wall so that it can be used to steady themselves
- Sequencing: ask the child to say which order they will put the clothes on before they start; or ask the child to order a set of visuals / pictures of clothing items
- Visuals: use pictures / checklists / visual charts
- Positioning: place the clothing the right way round for the child to attempt to put on; buy clothing with pictures on the front & point the picture out to the child so they can associate it with being at the front; point out labels inside clothes as going at the back (remove labels in side seams to avoid confusion)

### **Fastenings & Buttons**

- Use Velcro to adapt clothing
- Use big buttons to start; teach the child to unbutton first
- Enlarge the zip grip with a piece of cord / string or attach a keyring; remind the child to keep one hand still while the other moves to slot together the two pieces
- Use clothes with wide neck / arm holes as it's easier to locate them; try to avoid tight fitting clothes



### **General Guidance**

- Start with undressing, undressing is usually easier than dressing. Undressing before bed is a good time to start as you usually have more time at night than in the morning
- Use a consistent sequence & technique: place clothes in a pile in order / lay them out in order; use the same technique each time e.g. pull tops over the head first and then put arms through the sleeves; you could use pictures as a visual prompt to help remember the sequence
- Use backward chaining (the adult begins the task and the child does the last step, therefore getting the reward of finishing the task) e.g. for taking off a t-shirt: let the child remove the t-shirt from their head; let the child remove it from their neck; let the child remove the t-shirt with one arm in & one arm out; let the child remove the t-shirt with one arm in and one arm half out; let the child remove the t-shirt with both arms in and t-shirt pulled up to their shoulders; let the child fully remove the t-shirt