

Learning to Fasten Buttons - Helpful Hints



Information for Parents, Teachers and Carers

Which children may need support with this?

The majority of children will learn to fasten their buttons and progress with this skill, but for some children this can be more difficult. Here are some examples of children who may need support:

- Children with delayed motor skills
- Children with co-ordination or motor-planning difficulties
- Children with low muscle tone or altered muscle tone
- Children with hypermobility
- Children with reduced attention and concentration



For more information, please contact Occupational Therapy on:

For York and Selby Area: 01904 726599

For Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale Area: 01723 342357

Pre-buttoning Activities

- Paper weaving – learning the concept of ‘over and under’
- Obstacle courses – practicing going under, over, around and through
- Lacing cards and bead threading activities
- Posting coins
- Taking small objects out of ice-cube trays
- Nuts and bolts and construction style toys



Button Practice

- Practice with loose buttons (not stitched down) – transfer through a button hole and collect from the other side
- Practice with garments worn both on and off the body - *Be mindful that girls clothes tend to have the button on the left hand side and boys clothing, on the right hand side, so orient your clothes to be appropriate*
- The small buttons on school shirts – particularly cuff and collar can be tight and difficult to fasten. You may want to consider:
 - Moving the button nearer the edge of the cuff allowing the child to remove the arm without undoing the button
 - Sew a couple of centimetres of elastic in the position of the button and reattach the button to the end of the elastic
 - Snip the hole slightly larger or give the button a good wiggle / stretch
- If balance is a challenge, ask the child to sit on a chair or against a wall
- Give your child plenty of time so that they do not feel rushed
- Start practicing with larger, flat buttons (instead of concave) and then progressing to smaller ones (textured surface buttons are also useful)
- Only undo the top few buttons when taking off a shirt/blouse, and then remove the garment over the head. It can be put on over the head and only a few buttons will need to be done up

Tell us what you think

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

For York and Selby Area: 01904 724366

For Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale Area: 01723 342472

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- Caring about we do
- Respecting and valuing each other
- Listening in order to improve
- Always doing what we can to be helpful

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