

# TOP TIPS

**SET PREDICTABLE ROUTINES.**  
AS CHILDREN EXPERIENCE THESE ROUTINES OVER AND OVER, THEY LEARN TO ANTICIPATE WHAT COMES NEXT, AND THEY START TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY WITH LESS HELP.



**LET YOUR CHILD CHOOSE**  
INVOLVE THEM IN DECIDING WHAT TO WEAR, WHAT TO PLAY OR WHO TO CALL. THIS DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN THEY HAVE FREE REIN. PROVIDE TWO OR THREE OPTIONS, AND THEN PRAISE THEIR GREAT ABILITY TO MAKE A CHOICE!

## LET YOUR CHILD HELP

CHILDREN LOVE TO HELP! IN ADDITION TO BUILDING INDEPENDENCE, THIS IS A GREAT TOOL FOR CALMING TANTRUMS OR REDIRECTING BEHAVIOR BY GIVING THEM A SENSE OF CONTROL. WHEN YOU ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO HELP, YOU FOSTER THEIR CONFIDENCE AND GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW.

## LET YOUR CHILD SOLVE PROBLEMS

BE SURE TO ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO TRY THINGS THAT ARE HARD AND TO SOLVE (SMALL) PROBLEMS ON THEIR OWN. MANY TIMES, WE PROJECT OUR STRESS OR FRUSTRATION ONTO CHILDREN WHEN, IN FACT, THEY ARE HAPPY PROBLEM-SOLVERS. WHEN CHILDREN ARE FIRST LEARNING TO CRAWL OR WALK, WE MUST LET THEM FALL. SIMILARLY, WHEN CHILDREN ARE LEARNING TO PUT ON THEIR SHOES, WE MUST ALLOW THEM TO PUT THEM ON THE WRONG FEET. WAIT UNTIL YOUR CHILD ASKS FOR HELP OR PROVIDE A SMALL HINT TO GET THEM TO THE NEXT STEP.



# DEVELOPING YOUR CHILD'S INDEPENDENCE



**A LEAFLET FOR PARENTS / CARERS**

## WHY IS INDEPENDENCE IMPORTANT?

INDEPENDENCE IS ABOUT LEARNING TO DO THINGS FOR ONESELF, WHICH INCLUDES MAKING DECISIONS AND TAKING ON RESPONSIBILITY. THESE ARE HUGELY IMPORTANT SKILLS FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN TO COPE WITH SCHOOL AND INTO ADULTHOOD.

HELPING CHILDREN TO BECOME INDEPENDENT IS SO IMPORTANT AND IS A MAJOR FOCUS OF THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND. IN YOUR CHILD'S EARLY YEARS SETTING THERE WILL BE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR CHILD TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE.



WHEN INDEPENDENCE GROWS A CHILD'S CONFIDENCE ALSO GROWS. AS THEY MASTER NEW SKILLS OR TAKE ON SOME RESPONSIBILITY, THEY BEGIN TO SEE THEMSELVES AS BEING CAPABLE. THIS GIVES THEM ADDED CONFIDENCE AND MAKES THEM MORE LIKELY TO TRY OUT NEW THINGS.

LEARNING LIFE SKILLS WILL ALSO HELP YOUR CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY THEIR HAND-EYE CO-ORDINATION. MANY EVERYDAY TASKS, SUCH AS HANGING UP CLOTHES, POURING OUT DRINKS AND TIDYING AWAY TOYS, ALL INVOLVE USING PHYSICAL CO-ORDINATION AND MAKE AN EXCELLENT FOUNDATION FOR LATER SKILLS SUCH AS HANDWRITING AND DRAWING.



## WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY CHILD AT HOME?

HOME IS AN IDEAL PLACE TO PRACTISE BECOMING INDEPENDENT. START BY LOOKING TO SEE WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO ALREADY, AND BUILD ON THIS. IF YOUR CHILD CAN PUT THEIR COAT ON, MAYBE THEY CAN HAVE A GO AT DOING UP ONE OF THE BUTTONS OR PULLING UP THE ZIP ONCE YOU HAVE STARTED IT OFF.



THE KITCHEN CAN BE ANOTHER GOOD PLACE TO DEVELOP THEIR INDEPENDENCE. ENCOURAGE THEM TO HELP YOU PREPARE THE DINNER, FOR EXAMPLE THEY MIGHT WANT TO CHOOSE AND WASH A FEW VEGETABLES OR GET OUT SOME ITEMS FROM THE FRIDGE, OR SET THE TABLE.



CHILDREN DO NEED A LITTLE EXTRA TIME TO MANAGE EVEN SIMPLE TASKS, BUT GRADUALLY, THEY WILL SPEED UP AND BECOME CAPABLE. IT IS WORTH IGNORING THE TEMPTATION TO IMMEDIATELY TAKE OVER A TASK IF A CHILD IS STRUGGLING. SOMETIMES A LITTLE MORE TIME OR A FEW WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT ARE ALL YOUR CHILD NEEDS.