

Zipper Skills

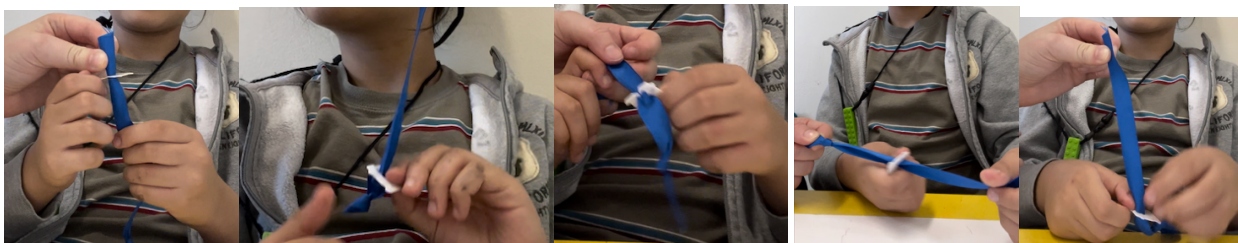
As children grow, they gain skills necessary to complete activities of daily living (ADLs) and engage in developmentally appropriate daily occupations. An individual's occupation plays a critical role in defining his or her identity and sense of competence. The ability to dress is an ADL achieved successfully by most young children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old, contributing to their growing sense of independence and self-confidence. Dressing proficiency requires a combination of visual-motor, fine motor, and cognitive-linguistic abilities. A zipper is a functional skill needed by young children to become more independent, allowing them to participate more fully in school and at home.

Strategies for Struggles

- Adding a ring to the bottom of the zipper for an easier grasp
- Use stickers to show child where to place hand to hold fabric
- Use a ribbon and a ring or bread bag plastic ties to help child understand the motion
- Make up a story to help child learn the sequence
- Use backward chaining where adult provides assistance throughout several steps until the child can complete the last steps independently

Ribbon and Plastic Ties

Start with having the adult holding one side while the child moves the plastic ties up and down
Continue with clipping the top of the ribbon at chest level of the child's shirt to help imagine doing the motion on their own body



Reference

Silverman, F., Knight, C., & Grasso, A. (2021). Efficacy of an intervention to teach zipping: A two-group control study. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy* 75(2).
<https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2021.043190>