

# Areas of Learning

## Physical Development – Clothing... Am I prepared?



Fashion versus functionality – Many of us can all think of a time when we have chosen style over substance...when the shoes we chose looked how we wanted, but we're uncomfortable to walk in? or the coat we chose to wear fit the occasion, but not the weather?

The impact of how children are clothed and how we support them to make sensible choices themselves about what they wear, can not be overlooked.

Can you think of a time where a child toilet training came to your setting wearing dungarees? How about tights? What about jeans with a belt? How effective was this? What was the impact on the child's independence?

How about a time when a child came for the day in their favourite costume? How did their cape or their wings impact on their ability to move unimpeded?

What about the child that came in their favourite wellington boots? Were they able to climb the climbing frame easily? Could they sit on the carpet comfortably?

These scenarios are not uncommon in the early years and many of you will work with your parents and children to promote sensible attire for a day of play and learning. But have you reflected recently on how effective this is?

## Task 1

Consider what key messages are shared about appropriate clothing with parents and when.

- **Self-care** – how they are encouraged to practice these skills. The different kinds of fastenings they will be supported to master, putting on their own gloves, securing their own shoes etc. fine tuning their fine motor skills as they grow and learn.
- **Weather** – what is needed to ensure that the child is warm/cool enough, protected against the elements and how the child is supported to make practical choices themselves about what best to wear.
- **Routine** – What the days include e.g., playing and exploring, sitting, toileting, sleeping/resting etc. How might their clothing impact on their ability to do so.
- **Toilet training** – what choices might be more sensible to enable the child to practice their toileting with ease, avoiding unnecessary obstacles such as intricate fastenings etc. Having spare clothing for when changing is necessary.
- **Feeding** – are bibs/aprons provided? Mealtimes can get messy, especially when children are weaning or exploring new foods etc. do parents understand the value of this and why spillages and stains can be expected?
- **Messy** – do you share the kinds of experiences you will provide children with, how your messy play impacts on their physical development and how it is inevitable that some excess mess can be expected?!

Create a handout or a display for parents to highlight key messages about physical clothing. See the link below for some do's and don'ts that can be shared with parents and carers.

[Dress your toddler for function, not style – Active For Life](#)