

# Developing Independence in 3 - 5 year olds



**I Can Do It  
Myself**



We want children to grow up to be the best adults they can be.

Supporting them with their independence at a young age can have a positive impact on this.

'CHANGE'  
Is going to be hard, but that doesn't mean it isn't worth it!

You may read information in this booklet that will change the way you parent. Please make sure you think about the approaches you are going to use beforehand, talk to the other parents/carers involved and remember that it will be hard, but it is worth it!

# Tips for supporting your child to get dressed

Choose a time to practise this when you are not in a rush to be somewhere on time



Don't worry if your child gets their jumper on backwards, shoes on the wrong feet; praise their efforts and then make a fun game out of switching them around.

## Ideas for FREE or CHEAP rewards



- They can choose a TV programme
- Play their favourite game with you
- Put food colouring in the bath (their choice of colour!)
- Play ball with them in the park
- Take them swimming
- Choose what to eat for tea
- Extra time watching their favourite TV programme
- A balloon
- Blowing bubbles
- A healthy snack they like for example, a box of raisins, cheese, carrot sticks



# Tips for supporting your child to eat by themselves

Eat with your child. This gives them a good role model of eating by themselves and trying new foods.

Drinking large quantities of milk fills the stomach and the child doesn't then feel hungry. Always offer food before a drink of milk.

Young children will go through phases of eating regular and well, to not eating much at all and possibly grazing. This is because the body decides how much it needs depending on its need (growing, learning) at the time.



Make sure your child knows what they are eating. Hiding food will get them to eat it, but when they are faced with the food in a different way, they will be reluctant to try.

Keep offering new foods. It takes the brain 16 goes of trying a new food to decide whether it likes it or not.

Young children only need 3 palmfuls of food each day. If you are worried about them not eating enough, bear this in mind as they probably are.

# Tips for supporting your child to drink from a cup



Give your child all their drinks in a cup.

Sucking from a baby bottle teat or sucking on a dummy can change the shape or growth of your child's teeth and could lead to dental intervention when they are older.

# Tips for getting your child into a healthy bedtime routine.

A good night's sleep for 3-5 year olds is 10-12 hours.

Talk to your child about what bedtime will look like. E.g. bath, pyjamas, brush teeth, story, lights out; so your child knows what to expect

Getting a good night's sleep means that their brain can rest properly and allows the learning connections to be strengthened.

Using a screen (TV, tablet, phone) can stop the brain from fully resting and growing.

