

Occupational Therapy Advice Sheet Bathing/Showering



Productive bathing time

- Before wash time, get out everything you need, including pyjamas, towels, and soap.
- Encourage your child to organise the items required: teaching responsibility and preparation skills. Allow child to select the towel, pyjamas, toys, etc., he or she will feel more included while developing decision-making skills. It prevents a forgotten towel, which leaves a child wet and freezing (taking enjoyment out of wash time!).
- Demonstrate to your child how to complete the different steps to bathing/showering.
- Use a picture app e.g. **“PhotoMind”** to remind your child of the routine. Trial free apps such as **“iDo hygiene”**, which focuses on personal care tasks.
- If bottles are the same size/shape, add a visual or tactile label to identify each one. E.g. put a rubber band around the shampoo bottle and leave the conditioner unmarked.
- Assign specific places for everything your child uses in bath/shower.
- Keep the towel and items within easy reach.
- Use shampoo, conditioner, and body wash that come in a pump. Teach your child to use “one pump” only.
- Use brands that have different color bottles (shampoo is a green bottle; conditioner is white etc.). This will help your child learn which bottle is which and stick with their routine.
- Use a timer in the bathroom that goes off after ten minutes e.g. a Time Tracker that lights up and has programmable sounds, an egg timer, ghostbuster timers, cow timers, princess timers. A timer can excite your child and make them enthusiastic to bathe!
- Use music to set the tempo. When songs change, go to the next step. This helps children who wash for too long or not long enough.



Bands

www.Amazon.com



Pump dispenser

Available in Pharmacies



Time Tracker

www.fuddyduddy.ie

Fear of Water

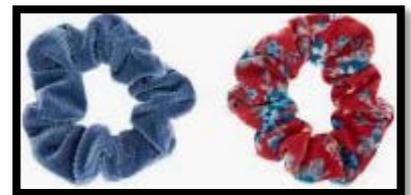
- Some children are afraid of the sound of rushing water. Reduce this fear by filling the bathtub with water before your child enters the bathroom.
- Some children are afraid of being pulled down the drain. Have your child help fill up the bathtub and bathe a waterproof toy or doll. When you're done, leave the toy in the water and unplug the drain, then watch together to show that the toy does not get sucked away. Remind your child that he or she is much larger than the toy!
- Encourage children to play and put their faces in the water and blow bubbles, with adult supervision.
- For younger children-put on your swimsuit and get in the tub with your child. You can comfort him or her throughout the bath.

Fun bathing time

- Give children time to put their hands in the sink water to prepare and learn that water play can be fun.
- Fancy bath toys are not required - Many kitchen utensils make great toys, e.g. measuring cup as a water scoop.
- Rotate bath toys so children don't get tired of the same ones.
- Teach children to wash themselves.
- Ask children to give a plastic toy (doll or animal) a bath so they can practice the skills of cleaning and grooming.
- Encourage children to wash themselves while singing the name of the body part out loud. Create a song by adding more body parts.

Water Safety during bathing

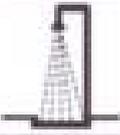
- Always supervise children around water.
- Teach the difference between the hot and cold taps- Use red and blue hair bobbin/scrunchies on the hot and cold handles.
- Use bath chalk or crayons in red and blue. Write HOT and COLD or draw a picture to help your child understand.
- Never leave a young child unattended in the bath. It is best to be within arm's reach to avoid accidents. Wipe up any water/soap spills as soon as possible to avoid slips.
- Water temperature should always be tested to avoid burns. Place the top of your hand in the running water to be sure it's not too hot/cold.
- Cover taps with foam cover-prevent injury if the child knocks against it.
- Use slip-resistant mats inside and outside of the bathtub or shower.
- Use a baby bathtub for infants and young children. Be sure your child is below the maximum weight limits for a tub (Follow information label).



Scrunchies
www.claire.com

Visual Schedule

List the steps required or use a visual schedule (See sample below). This can be laminated and stuck to the wall.

Shower Routine	
get undressed 	turn on water 
get in shower 	wet hair  
put shampoo in hand 	shampoo hair 
rinse hair 	put cream rinse in hand 
work through hair 	rinse hair 
wash face 	rinse face 
wash body  	rinse 
dry off   	get dressed 

Shower Routine Visual
Source: www.pinterest.com