

Self-Care SKILLS

Self-care is the child's ability to perform personal care tasks and ask for help when needed.

Expectations as children enter school:

- Washing hands and using toilet by themselves
- Finds materials to work with, and returns when done
- Finding and putting on coats, hats, shoes/boots
- Completing classroom chores
- Using a tissue when needed
- Can state their name
- Can locate personal belongings (backpack, jacket)
- Can fill and zip backpack

Books suggestions:

All By Myself

This is the Way

I Can

The Bag I'm taking to Grandma's

Mercer Mayer

Anne Dalton

Susan Winter

Shirley Neitzel

Expectations:

Allow children to attempt a task on their own. Offer opportunities to practice self-care skills and encourage family members to allow the child to do things on their own.

Activities Ideas:

Play Dress Up

Have a variety of materials available and allow children to put on, zip and button. Expect children to clean up when finished.

Picnic

Plan a picnic and let the children pack the bag.

Self-Care Charades

Talk with a child about some of the everyday things he or she does, such as drinking milk, brushing teeth, putting on socks and shoes, washing hands. Take turns guessing the activities. Let the child pick his/her favorite and show you how they can really do it!

The Helping Can

Materials: Juice can lids, oatmeal or coffee can

To Do: On juice concentrate lids write a family responsibility; set the table, pick up toys, collect garbage, sort socks, feed the cat etc. Place the lids in a coffee can or oatmeal container. In the morning, have each member of the family choose a lid. That person's job for the day (or week) is written on the lid.

Toothbrush Play

Materials: Old toothbrushes, rocks, dishes of water

To Do: Use the toothbrushes dipped in water to get the rocks clean and shiny!

Talk with the children about brushing on the top and the sides of the rock. Practice brushing gently in small circles. Practice holding the toothbrush at a slight angle.

continued on back

Bath Time Play

Materials: Plastic dolls, small washcloths, bar soap or dish soap, dish pan, water, towels

To Do: Children love to do this! Have them help you fill the dishpan with warm water. Is it too hot? Cold? Lower the doll into the water and soap up! Talk about washing the dolls face, ears, hair, toes, etc. Be sure to leave lots of time for just playing!

Placemats

Materials: Construction paper, clear contact paper, markers or crayons

To Do: Work with each child on tracing a small plate, bottom of cup or glass, and the pieces of silverware typically used for a meal onto a sheet of the construction paper. Decorate by adding color with the markers or crayons. Cover the paper with clear contact or shelf liner paper. Not only does this help children learn to set the table, it also teaches them one-to-one correspondence—an important math skill!

The Clean-Up Game

Materials: Toys or items from different parts of your room or home

To Do: Teach clean-up skills and sorting at the same time! Gather a variety of items, at least two from each area (if home include: kitchen, play room, garage, garbage, bathroom; if center include: art, blocks, manipulatives, dramatic play, etc.) Place the items in a pile or if small enough a pillow case. Teach this sorting game by first taking a turn yourself. Select an item, examine it, talk about its use and where it belongs. Then walk the item to its place. Continue giving the children turns. This is a great game to play again as new children enter the group.
To Expand: Read Margaret Miller's book *Where Does it Go?*

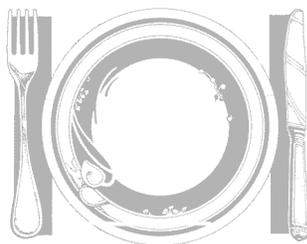
“What Would You Do?” game

To Do: Preschool age children need to have the independence to do things for themselves, the persistency to stick with challenging tasks yet the ability to ask for help. Come up with different scenarios to ask of children to encourage problem solving, such as:

- What would you do if you fell on the playground, scraped your knee and you were bleeding?
- What do you think you could do if you were in the hallway of the center (at a store, at a playground, etc.) and you didn't see a grown-up you recognized?
- What would you do if you were working a hard puzzle and got stuck?
- What could you do if an older kid pushed you down?

Kids are Capable of.....

- Bringing dishes to sink after eating
- Setting the table
- Putting dirty clothes in the hamper
- Feeding the family pet
- Getting mail out of mail box
- Helping with groceries
- Sorting laundry and putting away in drawers
- Washing dishes
- Picking out clothes
- Sorting recycling
- Making the bed each morning



Remember:

A child may not perform a task the same way as an adult would. The important thing is to give them the opportunity to try.