
Engaging Families to Support Self-Care Skills

INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the KidSense article, “Self-Care Skills.” The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

Goal

- ◆ Discuss the importance of developing preschoolers’ self-care skills.
- ◆ Identify strategies designed to improve preschoolers’ self-care skills at home and within your learning environment.
- ◆ Develop a plan to partner with families in supporting preschoolers’ self-care skills.

Activity

- ◆ Read the article.
- ◆ Use the questions below to reflect on ways to partner with families to support preschoolers’ self-care skills.
- ◆ Implement your plan and adjust as needed to support preschoolers’ self-care skills.

**“Self-care skills act as precursors for many school related tasks
as well as life skills.”**

Kid Sense

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ◆ What caught your attention from the article? What made that fact, excerpt, or example meaningful to you?

- ◆ The article outlines the importance of self-care skills as well as strategies used to improve preschoolers' self-care skills. This includes the use of a visual schedule, a reward chart, as well as breaking tasks down into smaller steps.
 - Describe the opportunities that children in your care have to practice self-care skills (e.g., dressing, cleaning up, gathering materials for play).
 - Are there times when you encourage children to use self-care skills and other times when you take a more active role in these routines?
 - Reflect on the strategies you use in your learning environment to support children's self-care skills. Which strategies work well? How do you support children's independence as they develop self-care skills?
 - What are some challenges you experience in supporting children's self-care skills? Consider ways in which you may overcome such challenges.

- ◆ Reflect on the strengths and unique needs of the families that you serve. Consider ways to collaborate with families to address their child's self-care skills. Reflect on families' unique ideas and perspectives about supporting children's self-care skills.
 - How can you partner with families to encourage the sharing of ideas and experiences in supporting children's self-care skills?
 - What additional resources may families need?
 - How can you support consistency in self-care practices at home and within the learning environment while respecting families' unique ways of supporting children's self-care skills?

- ◆ The article highlights the building blocks necessary to develop self-care skills. Think about a preschooler in your care that may benefit from additional support as they develop self-care skills.
 - Is the child experiencing challenges with any of the foundational building blocks mentioned in the article? What specific self-care challenges have you noticed within the learning environment?
 - From your ongoing communication with families, do you know if the child experiences these challenges at home? What are they noticing and sharing with you about their child's development of self-care skills?
 - What strategies may you implement to support the child's individual needs? How can you partner with the family in implementing these strategies?
 - Develop an action plan to partner with the child's family to implement strategies to support the child's unique self-care needs at home and within the learning environment.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about encouraging preschoolers' self-care skills

- ◆ **Source:** The Center for Development & Learning
- ◆ **Video:** Promoting Self Help Skills
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6K2yp1mkx8>
- ◆ **Description:** This video explains the importance of self-help skills and shares practical ways to support children's independence through activities such self-feeding, dressing, toileting, and daily chores.

- ◆ **Source:** Very Well Family.
- ◆ **Article:** Tips for Teaching Your Preschoolers Important Self-Help Skills
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.verywellfamily.com/preschooler-self-care-skills-2764714>
- ◆ **Description:** This article shares practical ways caregivers can support children in reaching self-care milestones. Strategies for supporting children in activities such as dressing, using utensils, hand washing, and preparing foods are explained.

- ◆ **Source:** Cork & Kerry Primary Care Pediatric Occupational Therapy
- ◆ **Handout:** Self Care Skills
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/lho/corknorthlee/therapy/paediatric-occupational-therapy/self-care-skills.pdf>
- ◆ **Description:** This handout explains the importance of developing children's self-care skills as well as strategies to improve self-care skills such as dressing, feeding, toileting, and bathing.