



# Buttons



The following two handed activities require similar skills as for managing buttons.

- ④ **Cooking** – Making bread crumbs or kneading dough and pulling it apart and pinching it with thumb and index fingers together.
- ④ **Construction games** – E.g Lego, K'nex, using play dough to make things using two doing different parts of the same task. 
- ④ **Lacing and sewing games** – learning concept of 'under', 'over', 'behind' and 'through' and holding material or board still whilst using the other hand to sew in and out.
- ④ **Obstacle course** – using whole body to carry out instructions such as moving 'under', 'over', 'through', 'around', 'behind', and 'in front'. Keep the pattern of instructions the same and see if the child can remember the sequence to carry out unaided.
- ④ **Opening jars and bottles** – or using toy screw and bolt set to use two hands together.
- ④ **Paper weaving** – rip up strips of paper and weave them in and out of each other.
- ④ **Picking up small items** – using the pad aspect of thumb and index finger or picking up things with tongs, pegs or children's toy tweezers. 
- ④ **Playdough**- roll it out and pinch it with index and thumb in opposition and the same with each finger in turn.
- ④ **Posting coins** – Holding the coins between pads of thumb and index finger.
- ④ **Practice doing buttons** - on a toy, a shirt placed in front of them or a buttons on a board or bag. Practice until they understand the concept and sequence of moves. Practice with using large, flat and textured buttons as this is easier to hold and less likely to slip. Practice with brightly coloured buttons to make it easier to see in contrast to material.
- ④ **Threading Beads** – hold the bead with one hand and thread with the other. 

# Preparation

- ⓐ Sit in a comfortable and supported position.
- ⓐ Make sure the button hole is slightly loose for the buttons.
- ⓐ Start with practicing unbuttoning buttons that are easy to access and see.
- ⓐ Try attaching buttons to the garment with thin elastic and once able to carry out task progress to threading buttons onto clothes.
- ⓐ Choose bright buttons for a garment that stand out in contrast to the colour of the clothing.



# Practice

- ⓐ Physical hand over hand help may help the child hold the button and button hole effectively and feel the required movements of each hand.
- ⓐ Line up the button holes and buttons. Work with one of the middle buttons first, that you find easier to reach and see.
- ⓐ Poke the thumb, that is on the same side as the button hole, into the button hole, and rest the index and middle finger on top of the thumb whilst peeling back the material around the button hole to open out the button hole space.
- ⓐ Using the other hand grasp the button with the index and middle fingers on top of the button and the thumb underneath the button, in a pad to pad grip.
- ⓐ Pull button hole and button closer together, and start to feed the button through the hole towards the thumb of the opposite hand.
- ⓐ As pushing the button through the hole, move the index and middle fingers of the button hole hand, in the same direction as the button (towards its palm away from the button holding hand), and at the same time turn the material over and push it over the button toward the other hand.
- ⓐ Then with pad to pad grip grab the incoming button with index and ring fingers on the top and thumb underneath. The button releasing hand should withdraw and start to ease the button hole material (with index and middle finger) backwards away from the direction of the button.
- ⓐ Once the button is through the hole make sure it is fully out. Pull it up and then lower it so it rests over the button hole.
- ⓐ Talk through the steps with clear simple commands.
- ⓐ Give praise throughout.

# Adjustments

- Try using a button hook.
- Where possible buy trousers or skirts with elasticated waists.
- Sew buttons on the top of coats and tops and use Velcro or press studs to attach the coat/top to itself.
- If possible buy loose fitting sleeves, so that cuff buttons can be left done up.
- Sew thin elastic onto cuff button holes so the child can push their hand through it while the button is still attached to the button hole.
- If possible make the button hole bigger and replace existing buttons with larger ones.
- Where this is not possible try replacing buttons with smaller ones.
- Put shirts on like a jumper with buttons already fastened.