



# Zips

The following two handed activities require similar skills as for negotiating zips.

- Ⓢ **Cooking** – Making bread crumbs or kneading dough and pulling it apart and pinching it with thumb and index fingers together.
- Ⓢ **Construction games** – e.g Especially activities involving pressing or sliding together.
- Ⓢ **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.
- Ⓢ **Opening jars and bottles** – or using toy screw and bolt set to use two hands together.
- Ⓢ **Paper weaving** – rip up strips of paper and weave them in and out of each other.
- Ⓢ **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.
- Ⓢ **Playdough** - roll it out and pinch it with index and thumb in opposition and the same with each finger in turn.
- Ⓢ **Posting coins** – Holding the coins between pads of thumb and index finger.
- Ⓢ **Practice doing zips** - on a toy, a fleece placed in front of them or a zip on a board or bag. Practice until they understand the concept and sequence of moves. Practice with using large, chunky and textured zips or zip attachments as this is easier to hold and less likely to slip. Practice with brightly coloured zips or zip attachments to make it easier to see in contrast to material.



- Ⓢ **Threading Beads** – hold the bead with one hand and thread with the other.



# Preparation

- ④ Sit in a comfortable and supported position.
- ④ Start with large chunky zips which are textured and sewn slightly above the surface of the garment and progress to smaller ones.
- ④ Make sure the zip is accessible and attaches easily, gliding up and down the runners without catching on material.
- ④ Start with zips that are forward facing and are easy to see and reach.
- ④ Choose bright zip attachments for a garment that stand out in contrast to the colour of the clothing.

# Practice

These ideas will help with practicing zips when you have plenty of time.



- ④ Physical hand over hand help may help the child hold the zip and feel the required movements of each hand in attaching the zip.
- ④ Line up both sides of the zip fastening. Rest the garment on your lap so you can easily see and reach the zip.
- ④ Make sure the zip is pushed right down to the bottom and is secured against the base of the runner. Hold the zip handle between the thumb and index finger of the hand on the same side as the zip. Secure it against the base by pushing down with the thumb and putting your middle finger underneath the base of the runner.
- ④ With the other hand use your thumb to tease back the material around the (non zip attachment) base of the other runner and hold the base with thumb and index finger.
- ④ Bring both sides towards each other and align the (non zip) attachment base just above the zip and slide it down so both bases are secured and level with each other. Check it is attached by continuing to slide the (non zip) attachment base down the zip into the base of the runner until it can go no longer.
- ④ Continue to hold the (non zip) side and keep it still.
- ④ Holding the zip handle gently and smoothly pull upwards away from the base. Make sure your movements are slow and smooth, vigorous movements can lead to catching skin in zips.
- ④ To unzip pull zip towards the base and detach the zip. Keep the zip secure with middle finger at the bottom of the base and index and thumb on the zip handle with the thumb exerting pressure towards the base. Keep this hand still while the (non Zip) hand slides the attachment away from the base and along the zip until it is free.
- ④ Talk through the steps with clear simple commands and give praise!
- ④ Initially start the task and let the child continue it, until confident and then let them try the initial stage of the task.

# Adjustments

The following items could assist with developing your child's zip skills however this list is not exhaustive.

- ② Try using a ribbon, key ring, cord or chunky attachment secured to the zip handle, to make it easier to grasp and pull.
- ② Where possible buy trousers or skirts with elasticated waists.
- ② Use Velcro or press studs to fasten clothing.
- ② Buy clothing with base attachment already secured so the only action for the child is the movement of the zip up and down on the runners.
- ② On tops where possible secure the zip attachment together and put it on like a jumper, running the zip up and down once it has been put on over the child's head.
- ② Look for clothing with a 'fake' fly.
- ② Replace ordinary zips with chunky zips that are slightly raised so can be accessed more easily.

