

Do It Yourself

How can so much fun get my child ready for school?

How many times lately have you heard your child say, *"I can do it by myself!"* Why now? Because during the preschool years, young children want to assert their independence by doing things for themselves. They also love to watch and copy what other people are doing. Their eagerness to be independent at this age makes it the ideal time to learn basic self-help skills. Encourage them to DIY!

Try these at home!

- **Practice Pouring-** Let your child learn how to pour using a small plastic pitcher and a few plastic cups. Tell your child that the cups are "empty" and that he should pour the liquid into them until they are "full." Try emptying the pitcher and filling the cups, then emptying the cups to fill up the pitcher. Experiment with different size cups.
- **Help Around the House-** Helping with family chores and performing simple household tasks can be fun! Children can help when jobs are safe and fail-proof – put toys away, help set the table, wash the dishes, and put the laundry in piles.
- **Dress Yourself-** First, leave lots of time for your child to undress or dress. Unless your child shows an interest in learning to dress herself, wait until she can undress with some help before you introduce dressing. Use a doll or book to practice dressing skills.



Illustrations by Corey Smigliani

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Things to say:

- **"It's OK, let's clean it up."** - Spills and messes are part of learning to do it yourself.
- **"Can you pick out something to wear today?"** - Give your child the opportunity to choose his own clothing and dress himself.
- **"Zippers are tricky. Keep trying!"** - Buckles, belts, and buttons take strong fine motor skills.

Read All About It:

Happy Dresser (Happy Series) by Sally Hewitt and Craig Cameron

On My Own: Helping Kids Help Themselves by Tova Navarra and Tom Keer

Why Do I Need to Eat Fruits & Veggies? by Educational Activities

Mrs. Clean Jean's Housekeeping with Kids: Family Pick-Up Lines (and Household Routines) That Work with Less Work from You by Tara Aronson

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