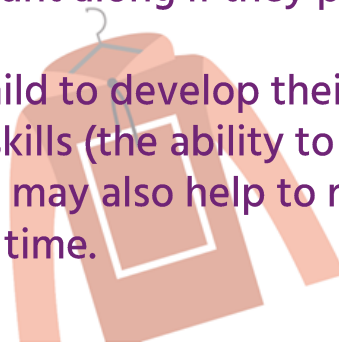


Dressing

- Your child may find it easier to dress after breakfast when they are feeling more awake, tactile sensitivity can be worse when they are tired.
- Always warn your child if you need to touch them, unexpected touch is much more likely to trigger a negative reaction.
- Give your child as much control as you can with self-care tasks.
- Try to use firm pressure when handling your child as this helps to override touch sensitivity.
- Some children prefer to see what you are doing. Use a mirror if needed.
- Allow your child to carry out self-care tasks themselves (if appropriate) or give hand-over-hand support as this gives a greater sense of control. The more control your child has, the better they will be able to cope.
- Try to work at child's pace to complete self-care tasks.
- Count down (from 5 or 10) for the duration of the task so your child knows how long it will last. Get your child to count along if they prefer.
- Helping your child to develop their touch discrimination skills (the ability to recognise objects by touch alone) may also help to reduce tactile sensitivity over time.



Clothing

- Many parents find it helpful to buy similar items when replacing clothing. You may want to buy larger sizes as well for your child to grow into.
- Some children find heavier clothing easier to tolerate, others prefer soft, loose or tight-fitting clothing. Follow your child's lead.
- Turn socks inside out if seams bother them.
- Seamless socks, tights and tag-free clothing are available, but can be a little more expensive (see: www.fledgelings.org.uk)
- Resistive exercise and 'heavy muscle work' help organise the sensory system and may be helpful prior to dressing tasks.

Deep pressure activities prior to dressing can also be helpful in 'dampening' touch sensitivity triggered by certain types of clothing. The following could be tried:

- Wrapping child tightly in a blanket (never cover their head!!!)
- Deep pressure massage with a gym ball
- Bear hug or tight cuddle – encourage the child to sit between adult's knees and apply deep pressure by squeezing knees together. *NB: get child to feedback how much pressure is helpful if they can.*

Sensory Occupational Therapy Service