

If you have any concerns about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on Freephone 0800 011 6113

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year contact NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 or via www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Our Centres:

Bull Plain Health Centre, Hertford: 01992 528102

Danestrete Health Centre, Stevenage: 01438 737782

Peace Children's Centre, Watford: 01923 470600

Pat Lewis Child Development Centre,
Hemel Hempstead: 01442 230861

St Albans Children's Centre: 01727 891100

Tewin Children's Development Centre,
QEII Hospital, Welwyn Garden City: 01707 328111

If you would like a copy of this document in **LARGE PRINT**, Braille or audio tape, or would like this information explained in your own language, please contact 01707 388038.

Produced with the kind permission of Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust

Produced by Hertfordshire Children's Occupational Therapists Date: January 2012
Review date: January 2014

Sensory Strategies

Grooming

Children's Occupational
Therapy Service



Caring for you
... closer to home

This leaflet is designed to give you advice on helping your child overcome any issues with grooming. If you have any other questions please talk to your occupational therapist.

Grooming

We spend a large portion of our day brushing our hair and teeth and washing our bodies. Our presentation to others is more inviting if we are clean and well-groomed

Whenever possible, let your child do the task independently. It contributes to self-esteem, and it is easier for the nervous system to process self-imposed touch than touch by another person.

If someone is successful in assisting your child with grooming, pay attention to:

- How they do it
- What kind of touch they use
- What they say
- How close to the child they stand, etc.



General strategies for self help skills

- Use visual aids to increase your child's understanding of the task (e.g. picture symbols, schedules, sequence strips).
- Use communication supports (e.g. social stories, picture symbols).
- Build in consistency and predictability to decrease stress.
- Have an organised environment; put things back in place so your child will be more independent in finding them.
- Use calming strategies that are specific to your child.
- Remember that deep pressure touch has a more organising effect than light touch.
- Minimise other sensory input whenever possible.
- Try using an electric toothbrush as some children find the vibration calming.
- Try cutting nails following the child's bath as nails are softer and use clippers rather than scissors.

[Ideas for Self Help Skills – for children with Sensory Issues](#) Adapted from 'Building Bridges through Sensory Integration' by Ellen Youch, Paula Aquilla & Shirley Suttan