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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](http://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

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Sensory Strategies

Hair Cutting

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 hair cutting. If you have any other questions please talk to your occupational therapist.

## Hair cutting

Hair cutting can cause children a lot of stress and discomfort if they are overly sensitive to touch and sound.

## Sensory Strategies

- Use of a mirror and verbal warnings to predict touch.
- Try earphones to block out the noise of the clippers.
- Place downward pressure on the head, through the neck and shoulders.
- Use firm strokes with the comb.
- Blow away all bits of hairs prior to getting dressed.
- Look for a flexible and sensitive hairdresser – it will be worth it.
- Approach your child from the front rather than from behind.

## Other strategies

- Use visual aids and social stories to increase understanding of the task.
- Use distraction and motivators.
- Wash your child's hair prior to going to the hairdresser to decrease time spent there.
- Follow up with an enjoyable activity or treat.



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