



Encouraging Your Child's Independence

As your child grows, they begin to realize that they have control over their environment and they can learn to do things on their own.

- Set up an environment that allows your child to explore. Keep safe objects within your child's reach and allow them to choose their object or toy of interest.
- Allow your child to take the lead. It's okay to set limits, but allowing a child to choose or lead an activity will give them a sense of confidence.
- Teach your child. Being able to do things well is a key to independence. Walk your child through the steps it takes to accomplish a task.
- Let your child help. Let your child help you fold clothes or wipe the table. They watch you do it and want to try too. This teaches them new skills.
- Resist the urge to jump in. Once you've taught your child to do something, allow him/her to do it on their own. Don't worry about spills or messes. Focus on letting them learn from their attempts.
- Let your child be an individual. Once your child has learned to dress themselves, occasionally let them choose what they want to wear. Don't worry if it doesn't match.
- Establish routines. Let your child know that there are tasks that need to be completed everyday such as brushing teeth. Set up a visual schedule or reward chart to reward them for when they do routine things on their own.