

Essential Eight Skills: Completing Tasks when Requested

Why is completing tasks when requested important?

Children are often bundles of energy and it can be hard to keep on task. This is a challenge that all parents and carers face, however for children with a learning disability or Autism, this can prove even harder.

Children with a learning disability or Autism can struggle to know what is being asked of them due to their level of understanding and/ or language. It is important to find a method of communicating requests to children so that they can carry out essential tasks that are supportive of their wellbeing.

What does it look like in daily life?

- Washing hands
- Brushing teeth
- Going to bed
- Putting shoes on
- Tidying away toys



Essential Eight Skills:

1. Making a request
2. Waiting
3. Accepting removals/transitions/sharing/turn taking
4. Completing tasks when requested
5. Accepting 'no'
6. Following directions related to health & safety
7. Completing daily living skills related to health & safety
8. Tolerating situations related to health & safety

Armstrong, H., Denne, L. D., & Bailey, T. (2021). The role of key skills as a risk marker for the development of challenging behaviour in children and young people who have an intellectual disability. *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support*, 11(2), 3-14.

How to learn and practise

- Use 'now and next' cards to demonstrate the task at hand and what the child will get to do after completing the task, e.g. 'first brush teeth, then story time'
- Use a timetable for the daily routine with symbols which can be removed as and when they have been completed, helping the child gain an understanding of completing tasks before moving onto the next

How to support learning

- Keep language simple
- Use key phrases highlighting what they are doing well
- Use lots of praise so they associate the skill with positivity e.g. 'good hand washing'
- Gradually increase the difficulty of the tasks, e.g. start by requesting tasks that they would voluntarily do anyway, before building up to tasks they are less likely to do without being asked to.

Please visit our website for videos explaining in more detail how to practise these and other essential skills

<https://www.camhsnorthderbyshire.nhs.uk/>

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