

Bathing/ Washing

- Experiment with scented or unscented products and a variety of sponges, bath mitts or loofahs. Experiment with different textured soaps EG bar, foam or liquid.
- Use firm downward touch when washing and encourage the person to wash themselves if possible.
- Deep water provides more firm calming pressure and just a small amount of water. Have the bath ready before the child undresses and aim to make the transition from undressing to getting in the bath as smooth as possible.
- Ensure the room is warm. If the sound of the running water bothers the child, try filling the bath with the door closed before entering the room.
- Be aware of light levels, natural or dim lighting is preferable.
- Consider the feel of the floor and bath mats.
- Provide extra mats and towel if necessary.
- Consider the time of day that a bath or shower will be most beneficial, if it is calming use as part of a bed time routine however if it is alerting complete at an alternative time.
- It is useful to make it part of the child's daily routine. Let the child regulate the temperature of the water.
- If showering let the child hold the shower head so that they can control the force and direction of the water.
- They may also prefer to turn the shower off while applying soap.
- Use a large towel and wrap the child tightly using firm pressure and dabbing for a calming approach. Or quick towel rubbing for an alerting approach. Alternatively the child could wear a towel or dressing gown.

Nail Cutting

- Develop a predictable routine for example wash hands rub cream into the hand and nail bed and gently compress their fingertips before cutting.
- Try cutting after a deep pressure activity such as a deep pressure massage.
- Use the term trim not cut.
- Try cutting the nails after a bath as the nails will be softer.
- Consider using cuticle scissors rather than nail scissors.
- Consider where the person sits to have their nails cut, a weighted blanket may provide a calming pressure.
- Ensure you leave a little white edge rather than cutting the nails right back to the skin.
- Use nail file to firmly file the nails.
- Hold the child's hand using firm pressure or place their hand on the table and press on the nail whilst leaving the nail bed exposed for cutting.
- Where possible teach the child to cut their own nails as this is easier to tolerate.
- For toe nails encourage the child to walk bare foot prior to cutting toe nails to help desensitise the feet.