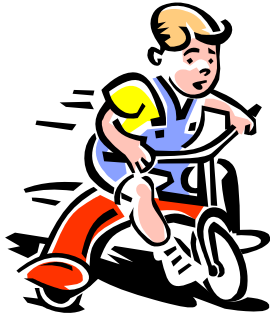
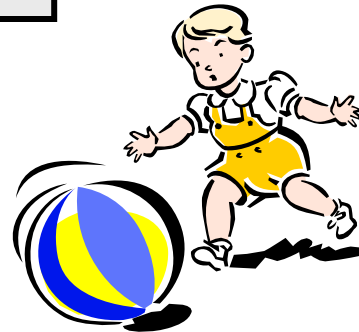


**CHILDREN'S CLOTHING**

**SELECTION**


When selecting clothing for young children, consider toddlers' and preschoolers' physical characteristics.

**TODDLERS**

Look for soft, unstructured styles that allow maximum freedom of movement, such as one-piece garments that fall from the shoulder. These are also practical because toddlers wear diapers and have not developed a waistline. Leg openings with snaps on toddlers' pants help make changing diapers easier.

For necklines, select collarless styles or flat collars, such as Peter pan and convertible collars. Avoid collars that may bind or restrict movement, such as a high button collar.

When toddlers are first learning to dress, pull-on garments with large neck and armhole openings are the easiest to manipulate. Because the toddler is always on the move, design features should be functional as well as decorative. For example, shoulder straps should criss-cross in the back to prevent them from sliding off shoulders. Shoulder tabs on shirts are another way to secure straps.

**PRESCHOOLERS**

Look for styles that allow preschoolers to move and jump about freely. Pockets are important features because preschoolers need places for the treasures they collect. Shoulder tabs on shirts are still valuable. When selecting a garment with long sleeves, avoid buttoned cuffs that restrict movement.

Jumpsuits are practical garments for preschoolers because they allow for mobility and will maintain a neat appearance. Preschoolers can also wear pants and skirts with elasticized waists because their waistlines have become more defined.

## SPECIAL FEATURES

**Growth features** are important because children grow rapidly. Children tend to grow faster in height than in width; therefore, the length of waist, arms, and legs will change more quickly than the width of shoulders, chest, and hips. Select clothing that allows for growth. Look for features such as one-piece garments without a waistline; raglan, kimono, or sleeveless designs; adjustable shoulder straps; and elasticized waistlines. Two-piece outfits and wrap styles will also allow room for growth.

To promote self-dressing and prevent bathroom accidents, **closures** should be on the front of garments so children can see the fasteners and manipulate them easily.

Select or adapt closures that are easy for young children to manipulate.

- **Zippers** can be easy for a child to operate if a charm or string is added to the pull tab.



- **Buttons** that are large or have a shank are easier to grasp. Many types of decorative buttons are available to add interest to children's clothing. Avoid buttons with irregular edges as these are more difficult than smooth, round buttons to manipulate.

- **Hook and loop fastener tape** is easy to manipulate and can be used in place of buttons or snaps. It is available by the centimeter or inch, in pre-cut shapes, and in a variety of colors.
- **Gripper snaps** are easier to manipulate than regular snaps.

Safety features should also be considered when selecting clothing for children. Avoid styles with long, flowing skirts; tie belts; drawstrings; or very full sleeves that may cause children to trip or get tangled.



Adapted for use in Kentucky with permission from Coats & Clark. (Reference Leaflet PE2174)

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