

# DAILY STEPS

DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

**Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations and activities. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this daily routine. Consult your pediatrician, physical therapist (PT), and/or occupational therapist (OT) first.**



Did you know everyday routines are a great opportunity to support STEM learning? You can talk about STEM ideas and use STEM words as you go through the day.

Children can learn about computational thinking concepts, like following a sequence of steps in a particular order. Help your young child recognize and describe a sequence of steps. Begin with 1 or 2 simple steps and then work towards 3, 4, or 5 more complex steps!

Children learn new things when they practice them in everyday routines. Try one or two of the following activities. With a little bit of practice, daily routine activities like getting dressed, brushing teeth, and handwashing can become a natural place to talk and learn about STEM. Use these ideas to set up the environment and materials to best suit your child's needs.



## DAILY STEPS

# ADAPTATIONS

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### ACCESS/ENVIRONMENT

#### WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

- Place materials within reach in a contained space for easier access
- Use stool if your child can't reach the sink
- Allow your child to sit on the bench/chair while putting on shoes, if they need trunk support

### MATERIALS

#### WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

- For easier grasping, adapt the materials by building up the handles or creating grip straps using household items (e.g., masking tape) or use long/bigger handled materials for easier grasping
- Place items in low tray within reach
- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- Use shoes with Velcro or other adjustable type opening
- Use adaptive shoes (Consult with your PT)
- Use dress aid to help the foot slip into the shoes
- Using elastic band to help your child's hand attach to the brush



*Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.*



*Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.*



*Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.*



# DAILY STEPS ADAPTATIONS

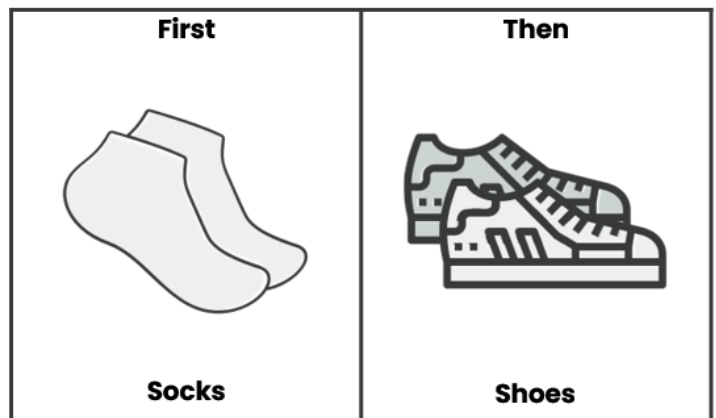
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## INTERACTIONS/INSTRUCTION WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

**Note: Communication may include the use of words, signs, gestures, and different types of cues (e.g., touch, object, movement, visual, etc.)**

- Narrate/sign your child's actions as they interact with the items
- Use a variety of methods of communication (e.g., sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage your child
- Communicate with your child eye level
- Speak/sign slowly, emphasize keywords, and wait for a response
- Praise your child's efforts with words, facial expression, or body language
- Make eye contact and smile as you talk to your child
- Provide hand-over-hand support or be physically close by if needed to help your child direct items
- Support children with communication challenges and/or visual impairments by using actual objects or pictures to represent steps of the routine
- Consider using visual cues or a tablet with pictures of the objects to signal next steps and/or each step of the sequence (see following pages)
- Use Braille on the visual cue cards to support children with visual impairment
- Model and demonstrate how to do the steps of the routine
- Let your child know beforehand that a new activity is going to begin



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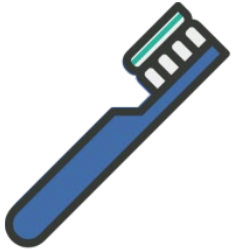


## DAILY STEPS

# BRUSHING TEETH

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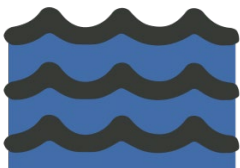
- Add toothpaste to toothbrush



- Brush teeth up and down, side to side, and in small circles



- Brush tongue



- Rinse

- Repeat after each meal



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# HAND WASHING

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- Wet hands

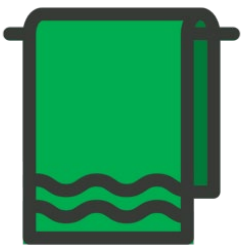


- Apply soap



- Rub hands together

- Rinse hands



- Dry hands with towel

- Turn off water with towel



## DAILY STEPS

# PUTTING ON SHOES

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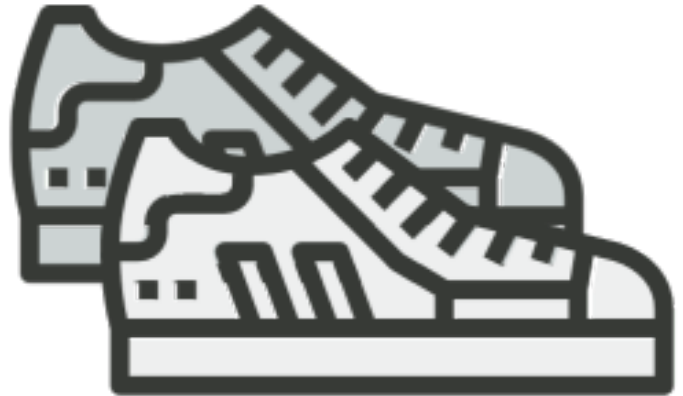
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**First**



**Socks**

**Then**



**Shoes**



## DAILY STEPS

# EXPLORATION I

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## Brushing Teeth

**Description:** Help your child recognize that there are **steps in daily routines**. Encourage your child to **follow the steps**. Use cues to help your child **follow the steps** if needed. While brushing teeth, talk about the importance of **following steps**. Say the steps out loud as you and/or your child complete them.

### What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to explore all kinds of materials. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This activity is particularly helpful for children to learn the sequencing concept of computational thinking.

Ask "**What should we do first? Next? Then what? Last?**". Consider intentionally messing up (e.g., starting to brush your teeth without toothpaste) to see if your child notices that you missed a step. It may be helpful to have pictures to illustrate each step (get toothpaste and toothbrush, put toothpaste on toothbrush, turn on water, get toothbrush wet, brush teeth, rinse, spit, turn off water). You can help the child in put the pictures in the correct order somewhere where the child can see while brushing their teeth.







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# EXPLORATION II

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## Hand Washer

**Description:** Help your child recognize that there are **steps in daily routines**. Encourage your child to **follow the steps**. *"First, handwashing, then snack."* Use cues to help your child **follow the steps** if needed.

### What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to recognize patterns in their daily routines. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Talk about the importance of following steps, a type of **sequence**. *"By washing our hands first, we will know the food we make is safe to eat.."* Ask, *"What do you think will happen if we miss a step?"*

Ask **"What should we do first? Next? Then what? Last?"** It might be fun to do one step out of order (e.g., dry your hands before you turn on the water) and see if your child notices. Having pictures to show each step (turn on water, run hands under water, get soap, lather soap, rinse hands, turn off water, get towel and dry hands) can also be really helpful.







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# EXPLORATION III

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## Putting on Shoes

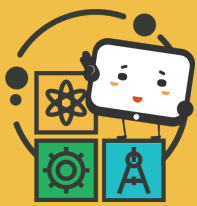
**Description:** Help your child recognize that there are **steps in daily routines**. Encourage your child to **follow the steps**. While putting on your child's shoes say all of the **steps** you take out loud. Talk about the importance of **following the steps in the right order**.

### What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to explore various materials. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Ask **"What should we do first? Next? Then what? Last?"** **"Which comes first? Socks or shoes?"** What would happen if we put on your shoes before your socks? Consider intentionally messing up (e.g., put on shoes without socks) to see if your child notices. It may be helpful to have pictures to illustrate each step of tying shoes (put on sock 1, sock 2, put on shoe 1, shoe 2, etc.). You can help the child in put the pictures in the correct order somewhere where the child can see while putting on their shoes.





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# ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

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- Talk about the steps involved with cooking
- Talk about the steps involved with setting the table for mealtimes
- Mix up steps and mess up on purpose to help highlight that the steps need to go in the right order.
- Check out these books about brushing teeth:
  - *Brushing Teeth* by Mari Schuh
  - *Brush Your Teeth, Please* by Jean Pidgeon
  - *Brush, Brush, Brush!* by Alicia Padron
- Check out these books about washing hands:
  - *Germs vs. Soap: A Silly Hygiene Book about Washing Hands!* by Didi Dragon
  - *Pete the Kitty: Wash Your Hands* by Kimberly & James Dean
  - *Germs Are Not for Sharing* by Elizabeth Verdick
- Check out these books about getting dressed:
  - *I Am the Best At Getting Dressed* by Melissa Winn & Zorana Rafailovic
  - *Getting Dressed* by Pauline Oud
  - *We Can Get Dressed: Putting on My Clothes* by Marion Cocklico

