

## Self-care

Let's yarn about daily living skills

### Does your child:

- want to wear the same clothes daily?
- dislike having a shower or bath?
- avoid having their hair cut or brushed?
- only use the toilet at home?
- dislike brushing their teeth?
- need lots of reminders to get ready in the morning?

### If your child behaves like this, you might try:

- keeping morning routines as predictable as possible
- building a routine around bath/shower time, allowing own choice of soaps and shampoos
- role play using pretend scissors or clippers, start with gentle touching or massage of scalp, use a visual support and reinforce positive behaviour
- practice using public toilets at quiet times, social story explaining the difference between home and public toilets e.g. number of toilets, sound of hand dryers, line ups, number of people
- allowing them to choose their own toothbrush and toothpaste, model brushing teeth using favourite toys, use visuals with step by step pictures, watch YouTube clips

### If you answered yes, this may mean:

- your young person has sensory sensitivities to smell, touch, taste and feel, in the environment around them
- they may need help and support to learn daily living skills. Teaching independence takes time and there is no one approach that suits every person
- they may find it hard to deal with change in the environment or during an activity e.g. wearing a different shirt

### Important:

Challenges with self-care are closely linked to sensory processing and coping with the environment. If you are concerned, seek support from your doctor, an Occupational Therapist (O.T.) or go to a child health centre.

**No shame  
Ask for help**