

COLLECTION OF SUPPORTING MATERIALS

THE NO LACES CLUB



This document contains support materials aimed at family members and professionals to work on situations similar to those described in the book “The No Laces Club”. This material includes information on strategies and techniques, guidelines, social stories and pictograms, among others.

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1. THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Children who are beginning to face the everyday problems of life, such as coping with teasing or comments made about them by others, or social interactions that adults or peers initiate, may be compromised by not knowing how to react to them.

Understanding how they feel and what they can do at any given moment to adapt to situations is a task that can be difficult if not discussed at an early age. These types of skills are found within the cognitive-social process better known as Emotional Intelligence and is the one that is responsible for identifying the emotions of oneself and others in order to act accordingly for us and for others.

When we begin to identify emotions, we only clearly observe happiness and sadness, or we can even understand how someone behaves when they are angry. However, there are some other emotions that are more complex to intuit than the other three that we need to name and go deeper into.

These are for example guilt, fear, envy or melancholy. And it is here when we ask ourselves: - how did I react when I had this emotion, and I didn't know what it meant? And the answer, in most cases, is that we have not been aware of what we were thinking or what we were saying. We were overcome by emotion, and it was emotion that controlled us.

We observe an increasing number of cases of bullying in children and adolescents. These behaviors called under a term, "Bullying", arise most of the time, of the emotional deficiencies that may present those who exercise this harassment and also those who receive it. The aggressors on the one hand do not identify that the person may be having a bad time at the time they mess with them, and the assaulted, may never have learned to identify when something is not right and makes us feel bad.

It is therefore as important to know the emotions, how to know what we can do to restore our well-being once some uncontrollable events have happened to us, such as being talked down to or having a fight with someone.

Here are three techniques to work on emotional intelligence and to be aware of what emotions exist and when they can appear:

1. Read stories with emotions.

We will look for a space and time of the day in which the child is quiet and without distractions.

We will choose a story and it will be the adult who will lead the turning of the pages and comment on what or who is on the pages, what he/she is doing and most importantly, how he/she is in relation to the situation he/she is living. It is important to point out with the finger the facial features of the character and if necessary and the child's level of understanding is good, compare the emotion with some personal situation of the child.

2. Create your own dictionary of emotions.

This involves placing on a cardboard card emotions represented by images or photographs that we will associate with characters they like or family members they can easily recognize.

We can also put pictures of the child in different situations, for example, happy because it is his/her birthday or scared because he/she has seen something he/she doesn't like and doesn't know.

The dictionary of emotions can be done through images when they are younger and in written form when they have already acquired literacy skills. We will add the name of the emotion next to the picture and we should hang this material in a visible place in the house. This will allow that when they need to express their emotions they can go to it or when we see that there is frustration or different emotions at the same time, we will help them to identify them with this material.

3. Paint emotions to music.

This task does not need so much adult guidance. We will only play different melodies and provide the infant with colors and a place to express what they are feeling through music.

We will avoid telling them how they should feel about one tune or another. We will simply let each one's expression flow and we will value and observe how they feel.

This exercise helps us to identify how they feel and we can express and comment freely.

2. GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING TOUCH AND PROPRIOCEPTION

Suggested games

Below are several games designed to help children work with their own body and improve their body awareness. These games are flexible and can be adapted according to the needs and characteristics of each child.

Game to imitate animals

Description: Children must imitate postures or movements characteristic of different animals. If they find it difficult, the adult can do the movement first as an example.

Examples:

- Crab: walk backwards.
- Dolphin: walking while jumping.
- Monkey: walking on hands and feet.
- Bear: walking on hands and feet with knees straight.
- Snake: crawl on the ground.
- Turtle: walk slowly.
- Frog: walk squatting and jumping.
- Hare: running.

Stickers on body parts game.

Description: Several activities where children place or identify stickers on different parts of the body.

Variants:

1. Name body parts and the child must place stickers in the correct place, either on his/her body or on someone else's body.
2. The adult places stickers on different parts of the child's body, who must name them and remove them.
3. Place stickers on the child's face, who must find them and remove them without using a mirror.

Twister Game

Description: This classic game is useful for working on body awareness, as well as being fun and requiring strength, coordination and concentration. If the game is not available, you can make one at home.

Instructions:

1. Use a carpet or white sheet with non-slip material and draw colored circles.
2. Create a roulette with indications such as right hand, left hand, right foot, left foot, and colors. For added difficulty, add body parts such as elbow or knee.

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3. Turn the roulette in turns and place the hands and feet in the corresponding circles according to the color. The player who can hold on the longest without falling wins.

Movement imitation game

Description: A person performs specific movements with arms, legs, etc., and the child must imitate them. The difficulty can be adjusted according to the characteristics of the child.

Important: Do not force children to perform the activities. Everything must be done progressively, respecting the time and tolerance of each child.

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3. GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE INTRINSIC HAND MOBILITY

We tend to think that difficulties in acquiring handwriting are due to specific hand problems, such as strength or clamping, but there are many more factors that have an impact on this task.

Below we will name some of these factors and show examples of exercises with which to improve this skill.

Postural control:

The ability to keep our head and trunk upright. With a stable posture, it is easier for the arm and hand to move freely. Although it seems simple, many children have difficulties to maintain this posture and perform the dissociation of movements between the body and the arm, moving the whole body at the same time.

To increase postural control that favors writing, it is important to work the muscles of the back and shoulders, which give us stability. Activities such as painting upside down, playing in a wheelbarrow position, pulling a rope or moving upside down from a wheeled surface are highly recommended.

Dominance:

Refers to the use of one hand predominantly over the other. This is a long process that usually culminates with the definition of laterality around 6 years of age, so it is common for children to write or draw with one hand or the other indistinctly, until they find their dominant hand for that task.

Stabilization of seated position:

Posture, as we have seen above is essential, so correct sedation is important with hip, knee and ankles in 90° flexion, with feet flat on the floor or on a support surface.

Intermanual manipulation:

In addition to the more global movements of the hand and fingers, there are also more precise movements that allow the manipulation of objects. These movements are:

- Transfer movement, which is defined as the manipulation of an object using the index-middle-thumb fingers. To encourage this movement we can play the game of “feeding an animal”. To do this, an ornament is placed at one end of the pencil, in the shape of an animal. At the other end we can put a hair ribbon that is not too tight. Moving the ribbon along the pencil, with the help of the three fingers, we reach the animal.
- Translation movement, where we move an object from the palm to the fingers and vice versa, always within the hand. In this case we can play “monster eats chickpeas”. We will paint eyes and a mouth on the palm of our hand. We will put a chickpea on the tip of our fingers and, closing our fingers little by little

and with a dragging movement, we feed the monster. To ask for more, we must take the chickpea from the monster to the fingers, making the opposite movement. To make the activity more difficult, we can add more chickpeas.

- Rotation movement, which consists of rotating an object with the fingers. For this movement, the traditional exercises of making balls with different materials or screws can be useful.

Dissociation of the hand:

The hand has two main functions to be given in writing, one of stabilization, performed by the ring and pinky fingers, and the other of mobility, performed by the index-middle-thumb fingers. On this occasion, we can tell the child, while writing, to keep two small pebbles between his/her middle and little fingers, without dropping them, as if they were a treasure.

Holding the pencil:

The pencil grip develops little by little until a correct grip is reached at 7 years of age. To facilitate this positioning, we can use small size pencils, which force the hand position to be closer to the expected grip, as they do not have more options to grasp the pencil.

Pencil pressure:

Sometimes the problem lies in the pressure that is made with the pencil on the paper, either by excess or defect:

- Little pressure: we can use pencils or soft colors, and reinforce intramanual movements and postural control.
- Excessive pressure: we can put a small ballast on the pencil, which will help in the grip and give more sense of control. In addition to reinforcing intra-manual movements and postural control, as excessive pressure may be due to the need to stabilize the posture or grip of the pencil.
- Fatigue: sometimes, writing difficulties are a great challenge for the child, causing much fatigue, both physical and mental and impact on their self-esteem, so we must take it into account when demanding and assessing the final results of the task.

Visual perception skills:

In this case, it is not about difficulty with the hand per se, but with the grapho perception of space, and the letters with respect to this space, their position, size, direction, etc. For this, the ideal is to initiate the recognition and tracing of letters with the help of more sensory materials, which allow greater experience of the letters, in addition to visual cues for tracing.

4. VISUAL AIDS FOR GROUP GAMES

As can be seen in the story, some people have difficulties in communication, which can limit them in different moments of their daily lives. In the case of boys and girls it could make it difficult to understand and participate in games, so strategies such as social stories, use of pictograms to explain them, adapting the environment or the material of the games themselves can be used.

Space organization:

- Drawing on the ground the limits of the playing field.
- Clearly identify, by means of images, colors (either printed or drawn with chalk), or material elements (hoops, cones, etc.) the posts or different places required by the game, for example, if we play “the houses”, draw on the floor the different houses.

Adaptation of game materials:

- Explanations of the games can be made using pictograms as support.
- When teams are made by groups, each member of the group can be identified by colored bibs or handkerchiefs.
- If it is a game in which one child does one action (for example, catching) and the rest do another (running so as not to get caught, following the example), the above signs can also be used to mark who does each action (putting a dungarees on the person who catches).
- In the case of games with simple commands, pictograms can be used as reinforcement to the verbal command, which will be displayed when the command is given. Another option is to put them on different parts of the body if the order is accompanied by a gesture of the person, for example, if we play “English chick” we can put on the back of the child who watches the order to move, and on the chest the order to stop, when he/she turns around to watch.
- We can also use timers or visual clocks (sand, colors, etc.) to mark the time of the game, in games that are conditioned by time.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS TO FOSTER PERSONAL AUTONOMY

The acquisition of autonomy in children is very beneficial for their development, since it allows them to:

- Boost self-esteem and self-concept.
- Facilitate their adaptation and management in different environments.
- Creation of habits and routines.
- The creation of new roles.
- Encourage awareness of their actions and responsibility for their actions.
- Help in the management of different feelings that may appear, such as frustration or pride.

We can make adaptations to encourage autonomy in the activity itself, or in the elements to be used.

In the activity itself:

1. Divide tasks into small skills needed. We can make a program of:
 - Backward chaining: the child performs the last action of the sequence of the activity we propose and is positively reinforced, preferably with words or gestures. Once this task has been mastered, the child will have to do the penultimate and the last action by him/herself to obtain the reinforcement, and so on.
 - Forward chaining: the child must perform the first task and reinforcement is obtained; then the first action is performed again along with the second, and so on.
2. Modeling: consists of serving as a model for the child and imitating what we do.
3. Physical Aids: we place our hands over the child's hands and help him/her to perform the task. We should minimize their use and remove them little by little as the child learns the action to be performed.
4. Verbal aids: by means of clear, specific and direct language explaining what the task consists of. We should minimize their use and remove them little by little as the child learns the action to be performed.
5. Visual aids: an orderly summary in image of each action that the child must perform to achieve the final task.

In the elements:

- Use of wide clothing to make it easy to put on or take off.
- Easy fasteners, such as hook-and-loop systems or snaps, that the child knows how to use or are easy to learn, thus promoting autonomy in dressing and grooming.
- Visual markers on clothing. For example:
 - Marking shoes to know which one goes on the left and which one on the right.
 - Marking socks, facilitating the identification of the top and the heel, in those that are shaped.
 - Drawings or marks on shirts and pants, thus identifying the front and the back.

ANNEX 1: PERSONAL HYGIENE SEQUENCE

- Print and cut out as needed.
- laminate and use an adhesive material to facilitate its placement on a surface that will be used as a sequence panel.
- The panel must be in a visible place, close to where the task is performed.
- In the following image we can see an example of a panel.





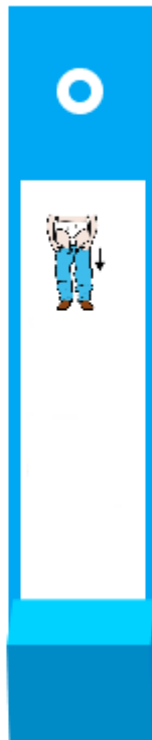
ANNEX 2: DRESSING SEQUENCE

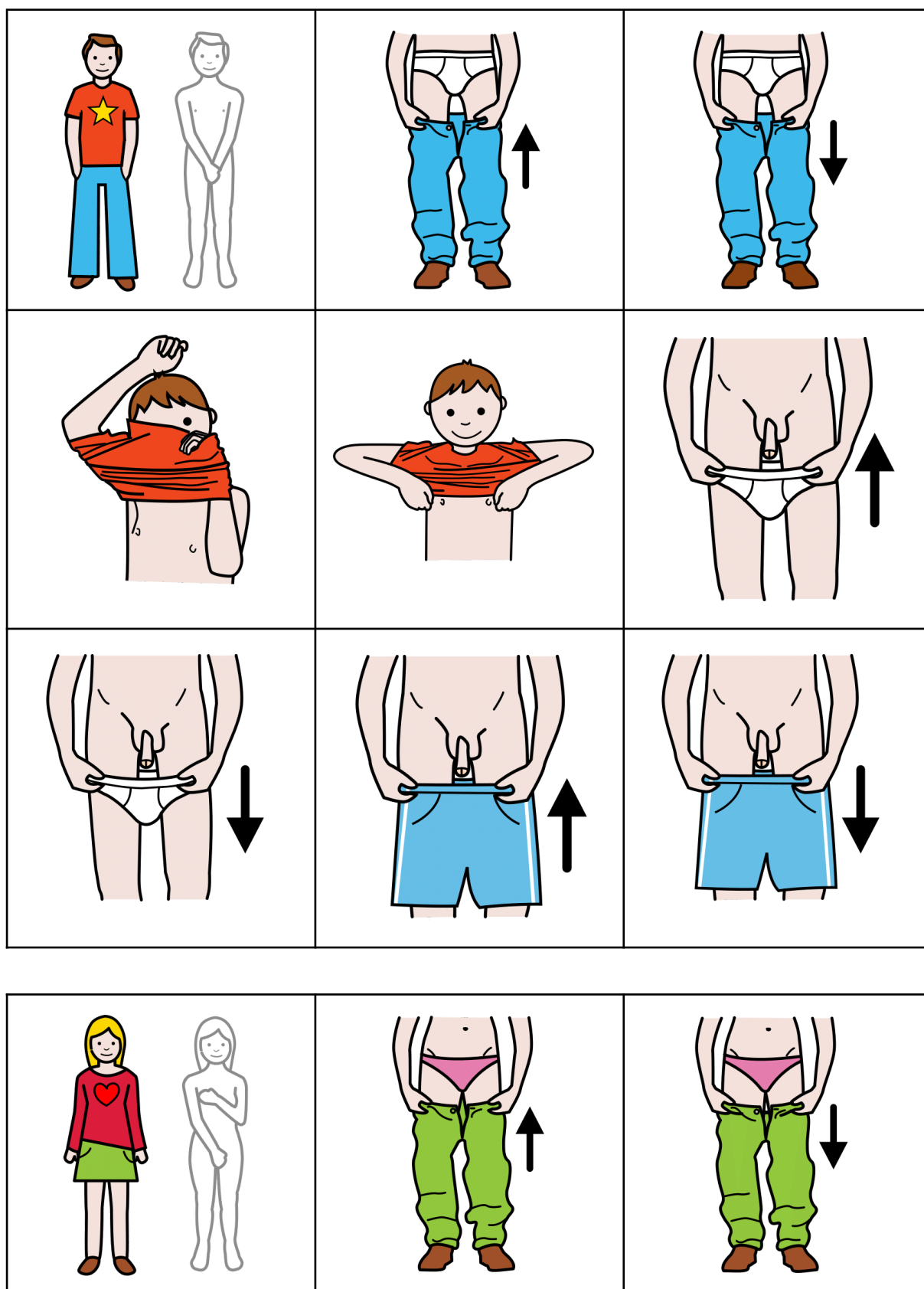
Print and cut out as needed.

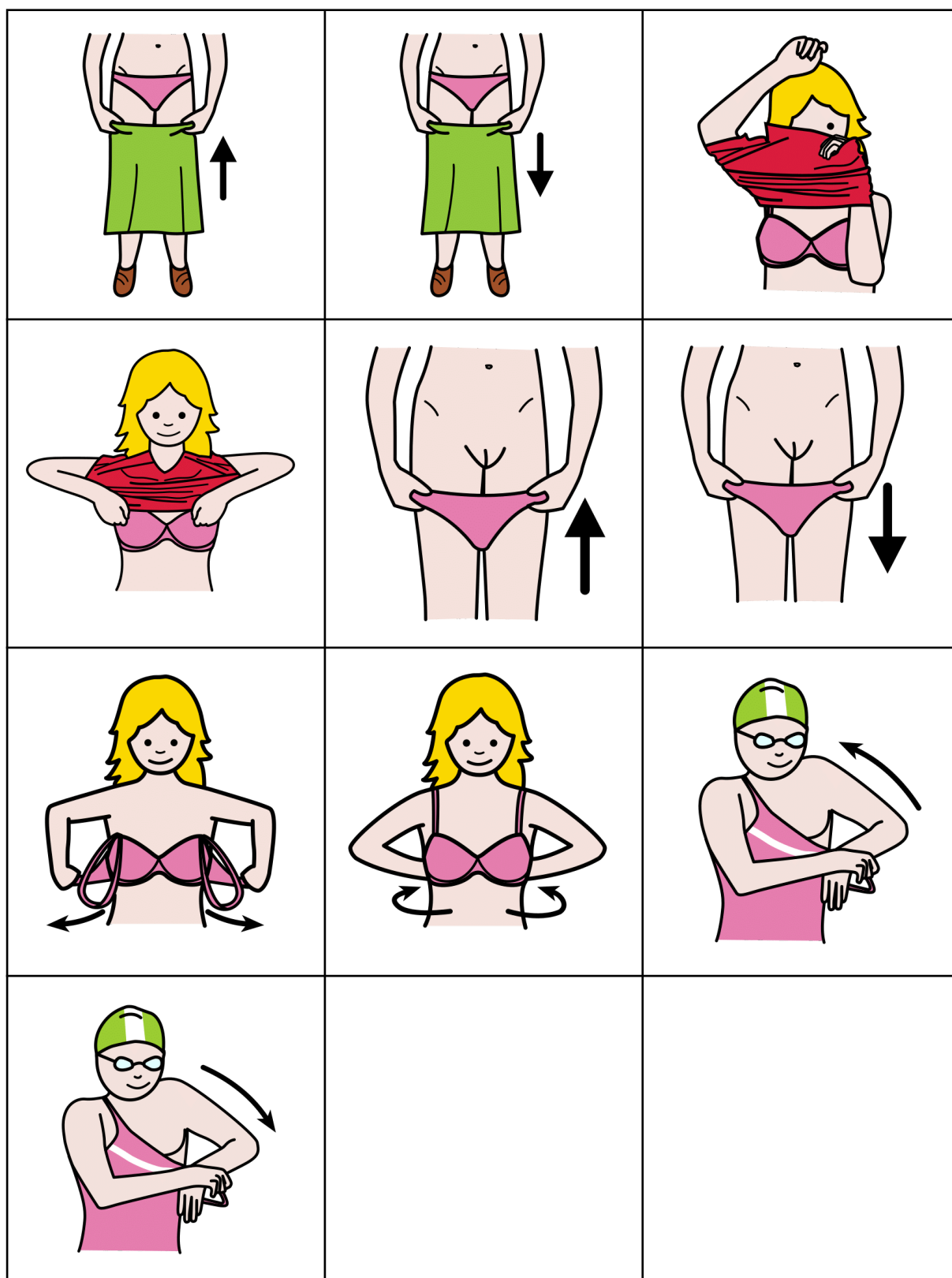
laminates and use an adhesive material to facilitate its placement on a surface that we will use as a sequence panel.

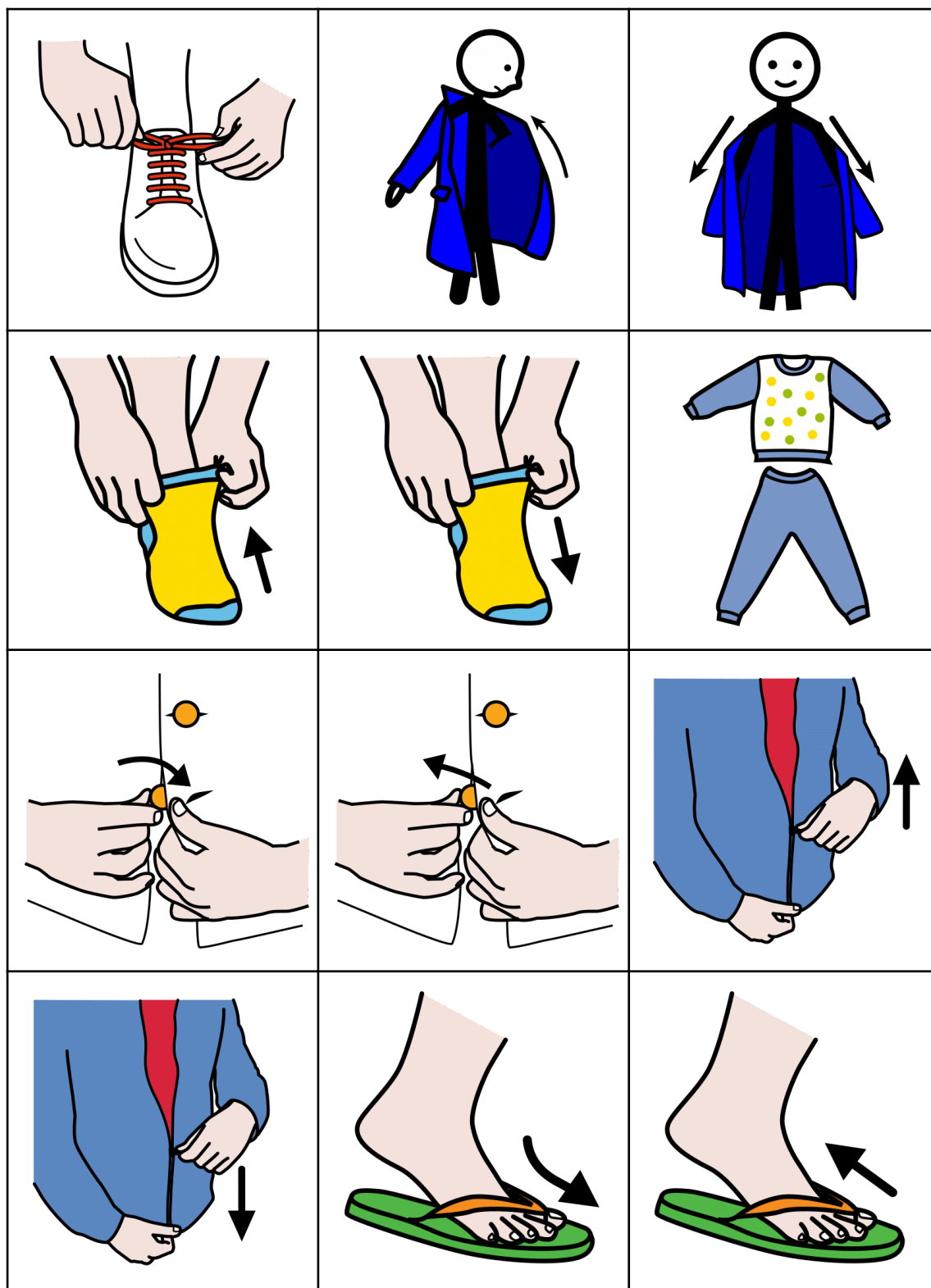
The panel must be in a visible place, close to where the task is performed.

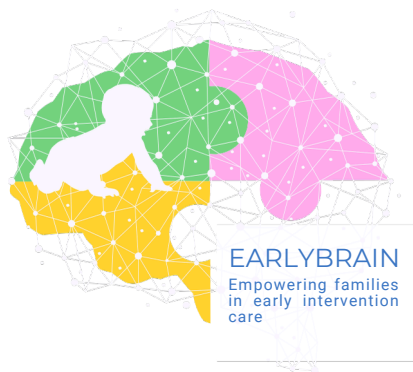
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