

**Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.**

## Developing independence

**Supporting children's independence enables them to take an active role in learning experiences and daily care routines. As children develop their independence they become more autonomous, making their own choices and decisions, which are key elements of supporting positive behaviour.**

Being independent develops children's physical skills, self-confidence and motivation and helps them to learn key life skills for the future.



1. Provide opportunities for children to be independent with adults on hand to support when needed
2. Role-model tasks, showing children how they can be achieved, e.g. putting on a coat or shoes
3. Encourage children to 'have a go' and try for themselves before rushing in to do it for them
4. Display photo images of tasks, showing each step, as a reminder for children, e.g. how to wash and dry your hands
5. Display visual timetables so children are aware of your daily routines and what is happening next
6. Include children in daily tasks and routines, e.g. laying the table at lunch time, pouring water from jugs and tidying away dishes
7. Give children a 'voice' in your setting by consulting them on the environment, resources, your behaviour expectations, etc.
8. Review your environment and routines to identify opportunities for offering children choices, for example:
  - a. Empowering children to make their own choices during art activities and deciding on the materials to use, how to use them and what the end product will look like
  - b. Introducing resources to support non-verbal children to make choices, this could include photos or objects linked to songs that children can choose from to indicate their song choices, introducing signing for staff and children or holding up objects for children to choose from, e.g. apple or banana.

**Find more resources at [www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna](http://www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna)**