

A Handy Tool



Put some paper cups or other useful things in a handy place that your child can reach and invite him to use these items for tools in various ways.

You can encourage your child's independence by making helpful objects available to him.



Have a drink.



Why this is important

As we grow, our need for tools increases. Early and varied opportunities to use tools help your child think creatively about objects and problem solving. Keeping useful household objects readily available for your child encourages independence.

What you do

- Encourage your child to use everyday objects, such as paper cups, as tools that help him complete tasks independently.
- Make the items easily available to him so that he can think of various ways to use them. For example, he can use a paper cup as a bowl for his dolls, a scoop in the sandbox, a watering can for his potted plant, or a temporary home for a snail he finds.
- Offer positive feedback for his ideas: *Using the cup to hold the snail is a good idea!*
- Try not to intervene when he uses an item incorrectly unless it is unsafe. For example, if he tries to stand on a paper cup to become taller, he will quickly learn that the cup will not work that way.

Another idea

Spend a few days observing your own behavior. Notice tasks that you do for your child that he can begin to do for himself if the tools are handy. Allow him to use more tools such as tape, boxes, safe scissors, a small wheelbarrow, a small step stool, washable markers, or a bucket. Don't restrict him from using them in new ways unless his actions are unsafe.

Let's read together!

Tools
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