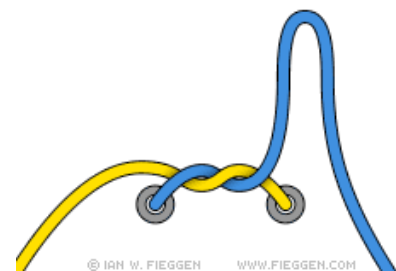


## CARE & LEARNING SERVICE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ADVICE FOR

### SHOELACES

- In order for a child to learn, they must be **motivated** to learn how to tie their shoelaces
  - If not, look at the alternative suggestions overleaf
- A child may lose interest if the task is too challenging or if it is continually done for them
- Decide on which way of tying you are going to use (eg bunny ears) and make sure that everyone is teaching the child the same way
- Sit in a comfortable, balanced position, with your back against something. Work somewhere where you can sit alongside each other, not facing each other
- It is best to practice on a shoe/trainer rather than practice on a toy or using a practice lace
- Practice in **short but frequent sessions**, eg 10 minutes a day
- Use the **same instructions / wording** every time
- Watch **videos** or look at **photos** that provide step by step instructions. There are lots of different websites that help break down knots into stages
  - These helped to explain the different methods you can try
  - One of the best for shoelaces is <http://www.fieggen.com/shoelace/knots.htm>
  - This also has an app available for smart phones
- Using **different coloured laces** can be useful so the child can distinguish between the 2 as they give an added visual cue



- Practice with the shoe somewhere the child can easily see it, eg on a table or holding between their thighs
- If a child has their shoe on their foot, get them to rest their foot on a step or chair so that it easier for them to reach
- Practice knots and bows on things other than just shoes, eg tying up food packages, dressing gown cord
- **Play games** with string and rope to get your child used to manipulating string in their fingers

### Backwards chaining

- Is a coaching method that helps children to feel successful
- The child completes the last step/part of an activity so that they get the reward of having completed the task
- Once successful, add on the step before, eg
  - You tie most of the shoelace and get the child to pull the bow tight
  - You tie most of the shoelace then get the child to “feed” the lace to make the second loop and then pull the bow tight
  - Continue until the child can tie the lace independently

### ALTERNATIVES

- Velcro
- Elasticised runners laces, eg lock laces
- Laces with a magnetic shoe closure
- Greepers
- Hickies

