

Bathtime tips

Things to try for parents and carers

Before bathtime:

- Use calming and regulating ideas before and after the task of washing and bathing to support keeping the child in a 'just right' state. Look at our calming activity sheet.
- Have a cuddle and read a book
- **Let them choose:** Can they pick a bath or a shower, what bubble bath to use and any toys to pop in there.
- **Prepare the room:** run the bath before taking you child in the bathroom. Check the room temperature and use dim lights, turn off any noisy fans

During bathtime:

- **Shower choices:** A big shower head spreads water more gently. If they can, let your child hold the shower head and control the water
- **Bubble bath and shower gel:** Can your child choose the bubble bath or shower gel. If they find smells difficult use unscented soaps and shampoos
- **Gentles movements:** Use slow steady movements if you are lifting or supporting your child into the bath, rather than fast movements.
- **Warm water:** Use warm water as this is very calming and soothing

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Bathtime fun!

- **Toys and Games:** Use bubbles, colorful bath toys, or let them draw on the bath tiles.
- **Mirror Time:** A mirror can help them see what's happening and feel more aware of their body.
- **Talk Through It:** Explain every step, like "Now I'm going to wash your arms," so they know what to expect.

Other tips:

- **Face Washing:** If they don't like water on their face, try goggles, a shower cap, or let them hold a towel over their face.
- **Stay Warm:** Use a big towel to keep them cozy and dry them quickly so they don't feel cold.
- **Helpful Tools:** A grab rail or a large platform step can make getting in and out easier.
- **Touch:** Use firm, sustained touch when you make contact with the child for washing and drying. Avoid light, unstructured touch.
- If the child dislikes having their face or body washed, encourage them to wash themselves. This touch can be easier for children to manage. You can use a dry sponge or equivalent to demonstrate on your own body.

Please scan the QR code for our video support for children and young people with sensory processing differences



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