

10 tips for Hair washing

Hair washing can sometimes feel painful, uncomfortable or distressing for a child – making it stressful for both them and their parent/carer. Below are some suggestions for you to try.

1. **Find out what they do not like about it** – Is it fear of getting water in their eyes? The smell of shampoo? Feeling of wet hair?
2. **Choose your time** – when your child is relaxed, not tired or hungry.
3. **Let them do it!** – Let your child fill up a plastic cup or jug with water and pour over his/her own head or let them use the shower head. The more control you can give your child in the hair washing process the better!
4. **Make It Fun!** – A water pistol, spray/squirt bottle, toys can do the trick of wetting and rinsing their hair but brings a little fun to bath time. Singing a song or using a mirror and doing funny hair styles with shampoo or making a beard from the bubbles.
5. **Shampoo-** Use a no tears shampoo that is unscented and easy to rinse out. Some children may be sensitive to strong smells of shampoo.
6. **Hair style** – keep hair cut short. A wet face cloth may be enough to wet and rinse his/her hair.
7. **Prepare** – use visuals to let your child know it's time for hair washing and after it will be time for a snack/treat. Let them know you have a dry towel at the ready.
8. **Role play** – outside of the bath roll play hair washing of dolls and read social stories about hair washing.
9. **Cover their eyes** – use a bath visor, goggles or a dry face cloth to keep water out of their eyes.
10. **Bath or Shower-** Try a bath rather than a shower or a shower rather than a bath depending on your child's preference.

