

Nail Trimming

HELPFUL HINTS

Positioning/Posture:

The following types of sensory input are calming to our systems. Providing these opportunities prior to trying nail cutting may help to reduce your child's anxiety.

- Slow rhythmic movement such as swinging or rocking in one direction i.e. back and forth or side to side.
- Deep pressure to muscles and joints e.g. massage or firm squeezing. Make your child into a 'sandwich' ask them to lie down on a blanket and pretend to put fillings on them by pressing cushions or cuddly toys on to her with a fair amount of pressure. Then wrap them up tight, giving them a 'bear hug'.
- Before nail clipping do resistive activities that provide deep pressure and proprioceptive input e.g. pushing hands against a wall, pushing palms together, press fingertips together firmly; wrap and cuddle firmly in a bath towel.
- Help desensitise fingers by playing with sand or dry rice in a tin – run fingers through, press in, find hidden objects.
- Soak hands and nails in the bath (or in warm water in a bowl/sink) first, to help soften nails.
- Try small nail scissors rather than nail clippers, as these may look less scary and make a different noise.



- Never cut nails too short.
- Try doing all the family members' nails on the same night, so no one is singled out, and the child can see others having it done calmly.
- Try distracting your child with TV or music, which also helps block out the sound of nail trimming.
- Try setting a timer to show when the activity will be finished.
- Offer a reward or treat on finishing.
- Break task down into more manageable chunks cutting 1-2 nails at a time or each evening.

