



*Assistive and Instructional Technology
Supporting Learners with Disabilities*

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTS FOR SELF CARE

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The Let's Participate! Project



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Assistive Technology supports for young children's self care needs strengthen their ability to participate in eating, dressing, bathing, and personal hygiene routines. Adaptations of readily available materials, as well as the use of specialized supports, accommodate a child's abilities to participate. The following bathtime scenario provides examples of AT supports that can help a child to participate fully during this every day routine. Always consider what is in the child's environment first, and what you may adapt before bringing in other supportive materials.

BATHTIME

Bath time has a dual purpose - getting clean while having fun in the water! This soothing medium provides a resistant quality where toys that are pushed down, pop up; items float, move away and splash in the water. Make sure you have plenty of toys and containers to keep them within reach. Suggestions include tea strainer, colander, any container with holes, canisters scoopers, eye dropper, plastic boats and blocks, squeeze bottles, and sponges of different varieties and sizes. As in any supervised environment, safe and secure positioning supports help a child to engage more. Children experience a different perspective of movement-- of their own bodies and objects- during bath time play. Some thrash around happily while others do not like the feeling of water in their face. A wide range of supports are available to make participating in this routine enjoyable!

Positioning Options for Children	Presenting Options for Toys	Play + Safety Materials
Tub seats/tubs	Buckets	Floating toys, balls
Laundry basket/ with seat inside	Basket keeps toys with reach	Basketball hoops
Reclined seats	Suction cups	Squeezable objects for squirting
Bath Bars (place in front of the child to hold onto)	Plastic floating rings	Anything that floats and bobs



Bath Mats (non-slip)	Sides of the tub	Scoops/containers/nets
Baskets	Floating bins	Foam shapes, sponges
		Foam soaps, paints
Safety/comfort items	Faucet Guards Water thermometers	Bath hat with brim washcloth

Examples of AT Supports:

Tub Seats and Tubs

This bath seat, with base suction cups, provides secure support for infants and young children. Both examples can be used as a "tub within a tub". A range of options is available to support children to safely sit and play.



Inflatable Bath Tub



Bath Tub Ring Seat

Scoop + Squeeze Bath Toys

Using soft toys that squirt water with containers to "catch" them can provide hours of bathtub fun. Look for "squeezies" that are especially soft and easy to use, or ones that stick to the sides of the tub.



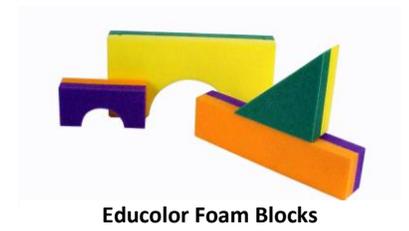
Mini Bath Buddies



Boon Bath Toy

Sponges & Foam Blocks

Foam and sponge shapes are available for bathtub play, in a variety of shapes and colors. They float, pop up when pushed under the water and stick on walls and tub sides. Sponges drip water and squeeze easily while the texture of the foam material invites children to explore.



Safety + Comfort Items

There are several items to keep children safe and comfortable in the bathtub. In addition to a secure bath seat, supports are available to protect a child from the faucet as well as too hot water, and to keep water out of faces.



Faucet spout cover



Bath Thermometer



Rinse Splashguard

BATH TIME STORY

Maria looks forward to bath time as she likes the way the water feels and moves when she moves her arms and legs slowly, then fast and up and down- splashing water all over! Her mother fills the tub with water, then balls, so that Maria finds one each time she pushes her hands down on the water. She reaches around and through the balls searching or feeling for other floating toys. As Maria is visually impaired, the bathtub provides lots of opportunities to feel textures and hear different sounds- and the sides of the tub are always there for her to feel. Spreading soapy cream on the sides feels soft, silky and gooey!

Bathtime Tips:

- *Never leave a child unattended in the bathtub. Children must be supervised closely.*
- Squeeze time - lots of materials are fun to squeeze and watch the water run out: washcloths, soft sponges, turkey basters, soft toys that squirt, etc.
- Try scooping water with cups, hands, or objects with nets.
- Sand toys make great water toys.
- Bath tub sides are great for drawing with foam or crayons. Foam shapes stick well to tub sides too.
- Affix a pool noodle across the top of the tub and hang various items from it.
- Take the fun of the bath time outside in warm weather. Small pools and inflated rafts work well to support a child's water play.
- Don't forget laminated pictures for communication and visual cues to support positive behaviors: **first** (wash hair)/**then** (play with toys); "I want the soap!", "I'm all done!"

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