



## Living is Learning – Doing the Washing

Doing the washing involves so many little tasks: collecting, piling, hanging, sorting, matching, folding (*Physical Development: Moving and Handling* and *Maths: Number*).

You will need: some dirty washing, a basket (or whatever you use), a washing machine, a hanger, or washing line and pegs and your child!

1. Collect up all the dirty clothes. This might involve making a big pile! If the clothes need separating, ask your child to help sort the different items into groups of dark and light colours (*Maths: Number*). How are you going to get all this washing to the washing machine? Do some carrying (*Physical Development: Moving and Handling*).
2. Now your child can push and shove all the washing into the washing machine (*Physical Development: Moving and Handling*). Show them how you put the powder or liquid in. Do you measure it – how much do you need? (*Maths: Shape, Space and Measure*). Close the door, turn the knob and push the button. What happens? What do they notice? What can they see/hear? (*Understanding the World: Technology*).
3. Now you wait! How long will it take? What's happening inside the washing machine?
4. Once the cycle is finished, your child can help you take the washing out of the machine and back into the basket. What has happened to it? Why is it wet? (*Communication and Language: Speaking*).
5. Time to hang it up. If you are using a clothes airer, your child can help hang things. Talk about where things go: socks at the bottom, long trousers at the top. If you're hanging the washing on a line, is there a way your child can have a go at this too? Squeezing to open and close pegs is a great fine motor developer and stretching up to peg the clothes works out the gross motor skills (*Physical Development: Moving and Handling*). If you are using a tumble dryer – your child can help put the wet washing in. More buttons to press. More things to hear.
6. Time to fold and put the clean washing away. What do they notice? How did it all get so dry? Talk about each item of clothing: name it, who does it belong to? (*Communication and Language: Speaking*). Socks are great for counting, sorting and matching (*Maths: Number*).

### Extension Ideas:

Use doing the washing as an opportunity to do some counting. How many socks? How many T shirts? Are there more socks than T shirts, or less? Can they find you one more of their pants? Put the socks into a group and the pants into a group. Talk about the two groups with your child, count the amounts, use **more** and **less**. (*Maths: Number*).