

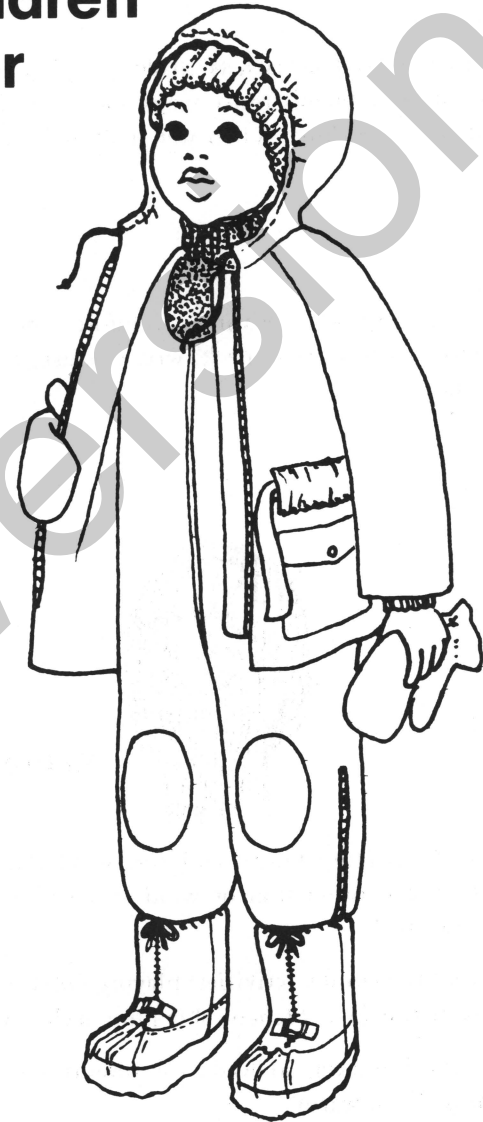
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Dressing Children for Winter

Children like clothing that is comfortable and will allow them to sit, run, jump, and play. Dressing children warmly does not need to be costly. It keeps them comfortable, cuts down on absences from school, and reduces doctor bills. Keeping in body heat, keeping out the cold, and selecting garments of the right fabrics and style will keep your child warm and safe.

To Keep in Body Heat

- **Wear More Than One Layer**
Several light weight, loosely fitted layers keep a child warmer than one heavy layer. Trapped air between layers becomes insulation and keeps out the cold. Wear cotton or cotton-polyester blend turtlenecks, underneath blouses, shirts, and dresses.
- **Wear Loosely Fitted Clothing**
Tight clothing slows down the flow of blood so child feels colder. Avoid too tight gloves, waistbands, pants, shoes and socks.
- **Wear Thick, Fuzzy Fabrics**
Choose fabrics such as corduroy, flannel, fleece, quilted, velour, pile, thermal, and sweater fabrics.
- **Wear Underclothing That Breathes**
Cotton and synthetic knits allow perspiration to escape instead of making clothes wet. Thermal knits add extra warmth.
- **Wear Socks Inside Thick-Soled Shoes or Boots**
If shoes or boots will not be too tight, put on a pair of lightweight cotton socks first and then a heavier pair of loosely fitting socks. Ankle and higher boots and shoes are warmer than low ones. Tennis shoes with thin flexible rubber soles and canvas tops are cold because body heat escapes as the cold passes through.
- **Wear Cap or Hood**
Since much body heat radiates from the head, keep the head covered. A tightly fitted cap or hood of thick wool-like fabric pile or quilted lining is a good



choice. Cover the lower part of the face with a scarf or a face mask for extra warmth.

- **Wear Mittens**
Wearing mittens allows the fingers to keep each other warm. Wear more than one pair if the two are not too tight and bulky. A water repellent finish will help keep hands dry and warmer. Vinyl mittens and boots dried near radiator may stiffen and crack.
- **Wear Clean Clothing**
Dirt clogs the air spaces in clothing. This reduces insulation.

Select the Best Fabric and Style

Fabric

Clothing of wool or acrylic are good choices if designed to keep in body heat. When compared with other fibers, wool is warmest, even when wet. A lining of real or fake fur, fleece, pile, or quilted fabric is a good choice. A tightly woven fabric keeps in more body heat than a loosely woven one.

Insulated outdoor jackets made of nylon taffeta or cotton-polyester blends resist snags and tears. Polyester fiberfill is a good buy. When wet it dries quicker than down.

Style

Consider styles for warmth, comfort, and growth. Garments that fit close to neck, wrists, waist, and ankles are warmest.

Bib style snowpants provide an extra layer over the chest and usually stay up well.

Rib knit cuffs inside sleeves and pant legs keep cold air from going up arms and legs.

Drawstring or belt at the waist will keep out wind and moisture.

Wind flap over or under jacket zipper helps keep out wind and moisture.

Permanent or detachable hood with drawstring helps keep out wind. Be sure hood is snug enough to move when child moves head.

A two-piece snowsuit may be more comfortable than a one-piece one. A one-piece may be easier for child to dress self.

Raglan sleeves allow for action and growth.



To Dress Children for Winter

- Know daily temperature and the wind chill factor which is a combination of wind speed and outdoor temperature.
- Consider the child's activities: playing outside, inside; sitting on the floor at school; shopping in closed center.
- Dress child in layers so he/she can unbutton or remove clothing if too warm.
- Buy outdoor clothing that fits. Too large clothing is

awkward to wear and can be unsafe. Too tight clothing makes child feel colder.

- Remember that weight does not mean warmth, layers and thickness do.
- Avoid long dangling scarves.
- Remember that light or bright colored clothing is safer for children early and late in the day. Adding reflective tape will make child more visible.
- Put child's name on all items of outdoor clothing.

This guide was originally written by Sherri Johnson, state extension specialist in textiles and clothing, University of Minnesota. It was revised with permission.

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