 **CHAINING METHOD**

**What is chaining?**

Chaining is a teaching method where in which sub-skills are reinforced in a sequence to enable the learner to perform more complex behaviours. For example, in teaching a child to tie shoes, each individual step, from tightening the laces to making the parts of the knot, would be taught and reinforced until the child can perform the complete task.

**Why use chaining method**

Children with additional learning needs may need chaining to learn tasks that others can learn by watching and imitating. It may also be the case that additional needs learners lack the innate desire to learn certain tasks.

In order to teach skills the adult will need to provide positive praise on the completion of each "link" in the "chain". So, for example, in the case of zipping a coat, the adult might plan to teach the skills over time—and reward each step along the way:

1. Find your coat
2. Put your coat on independently
3. Engage the zipper and pull it up
4. Complete the entire sequence on your own without support (final reward)

**Backward chaining**

Sometimes chaining may be too involved for a learner who can become frustrated or get lost going through a chain of steps. In a situation such as this, backward chaining may be a good option. In backward chaining, a parent or teachers completes most of the tasks in a chain, allowing the child to finish the final task. This gives the child an experience of [success](https://www.verywellfamily.com/help-improve-your-childs-bad-grades-3288130) and completion with every attempt. As this final task becomes easier, the adult can then slowly fade back and have the child complete more items in the chain.

**Example of Backward Chaining**

Getting a zipper started can be super-tricky, but zipping it up once it's on track is super-simple. Divide the job into these steps:

1. Thread the bottom piece into the zipper piece.
2. Slowly start the zipping to make sure the zipper is on track.
3. Pull the zipper the rest of the way up.

You can give your child the job of triumphantly whipping that zipper up to the top long before he or she has the ability to put the two parts of the zipper together.

**Top Tips**

* Firstly create a list of the task steps. This is commonly known as task analysis
* Provide hand over hand prompting if the child is unable to learn by having it modelled
* Provide positive reinforcement at every step.