

Children at events – What about the clothes?

Practical advice, tips and discussion on children's clothing. Share your insight and bring your own brilliant examples or not-so-successful attempts with you!

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### **Few examples: what did children actually wear?**

- images from manuscripts and paintings
  - o how to tell if the person is a child or a "lower" person
  - o boy in a tree stealing cherries etc...
- "little adults"
- Herjolfsnes
- Queen Margaret's Golden Gown
  - o possibly belonged to a teenaged girl
- carefully made shoes even from Turku
- depending on the people's resources, children could be clothed as elaborately or as modestly as adults

Same goes with the SCA...

### **Things I have found useful / handy / worth considering**

- note: I am all for hard-core periodness, but only when it comes to me myself and I
  - o sometimes being 100% period may not just be worth the trouble
- key words: comfortable to wear, quick & easy to dress / undress
- **Think layers!**
- what kids do at events and where: indoors / outdoors, play, sweat, knock down dishes, fall asleep during feast, get bored, run around in circles, don't quite make it to the toilet...

### **Materials:**

- washable!
- comfortable
- linen and wool
  - o synthetic fibres can even be a security hazard with candles all around...

- modern materials: I admit I've used modern pants, socks and shirts or bodies
  - o can be hidden under long shirts and dresses
  - o no need to make piles of SCA-clothes for kids who generally make a mess all the time
  - o outdoor clothes in the winter – out of necessity!
    - modern overalls, warm and/ or rubber boots, gloves, mittens...
    - can be “camouflaged” by using hoods and capes

### **The effort you put on making the clothes:**

- with 2 boys I have noticed over the years that
  - o clothes can be useless after just one event
    - especially pants and their crotches, and shirts' necklines  
(EXAMPLES)
  - o children outgrow their clothes surprisingly quickly, usually between events
- so consider how much effort you want to put into making them
- a method worth considering: machine sew the long seams, finish the visible seams by hand

### **Models / Patterns**

- long / knee-length **dress**s go a long way for both sexes, if they are wide enough around the torso
  - o underarm gores are a blessing!
    - can be added and widened when needed
  - o wideness of the sleeves and dress is a blessing – easier to dress the child
    - don't exaggerate though – a houppelande on a small child...
    - again: gores!
  - o not too long – the hems shouldn't prevent crawling and walking
  - o long sleeves can be rolled up, so some room for growth is ok there
  - o neckline should be big enough for comfortable and easy dressing up, but often turns out to be too big (big head, narrow shoulders...)
    - keyhole neckline
      - pros: head fits in without the neckline becoming big enough to fall off the shoulders
      - cons: tears easily... (EXAMPLES)

- ties, buttons, brooches (IF you can find safe ones and ones you don't regret to lose – avoid Kalevala – EXAMPLES: brooch lost, buttons missing)
- **coats:** spacious enough to fit the layers underneath and perhaps to even hide the modern stuff underneath (EXAMPLE)
- **caps, hats, coifs, veils and hoods**
  - as with adults, give the period look
  - depends on the child if they want to wear them
  - TIP: attach bells to the hood and you'll know where your child is
- **pants**
  - period pants would be nice, but...
    - children often prefer rubber band waists to ties
      - especially if the pants are wide enough for comfort and for preventing the crotch from tearing apart -> there is plenty of fabric around the waist
      - easier to use the toilet by themselves
    - the crotch, the crotch, the crotch...
    - baggy pants with leg ties à la Viking – ok, if the child has the patience to tie the bands
    - hoses – again, if the child is willing to wear them and go through the trouble of tying
  - honestly, modern sweat pants in low-key colours are a great substitute
- **shoes**
  - sure, you can buy or make period shoes, if you have the money, time and skills
  - indoors: gym shoes and slippers, woollen socks (they are slippery though) – floors are often cold
  - outdoors: just regular shoes will do
    - Cudgel: barefoot!