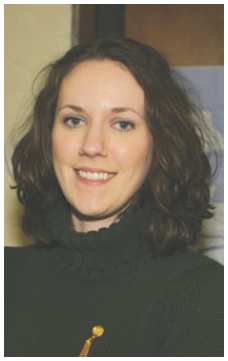

He looked offended when I asked him the question, but it's just better to be safe than sorry when it comes to your kids.

"Do you think you can handle dressing Baby Elsie," I asked asked my husband, putting on my shoes. "Or do you need me to put her clothes out?"

Jason cut me a look like I had insulted him. He even did his quick sigh that usually signals deep frustration.

"Are you serious," he asked. "Give me just a little credit. I think I can handle it."

My mind immediately went back a few years ago when our son James was an infant. I was trying to get ready in the bathroom and asked Jason to help me out by dressing James for the day.

When I emerged from my vanity, I saw my little boy with a pair of brown pants on with the purple "onesie" bodysuit snapped over them.

"Is this a joke," I asked, looking at the bodysuit snugged tight over the pants.

"What's the problem," Jason asked. "Does it not match?"

"Sure, it matches," I lied. "But the pants over the bodysuit. You don't snap it over the pants. He looks ridiculous. You can't honestly believe that's how it goes."

Apparently he really did believe it. But I let that memory float on out of my head this week. Surely he has learned.

Jason has come a long way, I thought to myself. He can change a diaper with one hand now. He can make a bottle of formula at 4 a.m. without even turning on any lights. He can assemble most toys within seconds, and he can balance a car seat, mug of coffee and diaper bag on one arm now.

"OK, I just wanted to make sure," I said.

James and I made our way out the door, and I really didn't give it a second thought.

And James and I even sang a tune together on the way home. Jason and Elsie were waiting for us when we arrived.

As we entered the house, James ran to his room to put on some play clothes. The smell of fried okra filled the kitchen. And my little princess was in her bouncy seat, grinning from ear to ear. But something didn't look right about her. Easing over to her, I noticed that her shirt looked funny.

Then it hit me.

"Jason, did you take her out like this," I asked.

"Oh yeah," he said. "Everybody went on and on about how cute she is. Why? Is something wrong?"

"This has got to be a joke," I said through a grin. "What did she really wear?"

Elsie, my poor baby girl, had her shirt on backwards. The polka dot turtleneck was on backwards.
The three snap buttons that belong on the back were serving as buttons on the front. The shirt wasn’t even a turtleneck anymore. Jason had somehow managed to fold it down like a collar.
“I had a heck of a time with that collar,” he explained.
And to top it all off, her pants didn’t match.
Shaking my head, I explained to Jason the concept of baby shirts and how the little snaps go on the back. I even showed him the markings on the back since baby shirts don’t have actual tags.
I visualized Jason taking Baby Elsie out that morning. He probably strutted around with his precious baby girl on his arm. As she smiled and laughed at everyone, he was probably the proudest Daddy ever.
But he was clueless that his little girl had her shirt on backwards and that her pants didn’t match.
Next time, I won’t ask. I will kindly leave an outfit on the bed.
I was telling Larry White about the incident after the city board meeting this week. Before I could explain to him, another male, about the button concept, he corrected my own assumption.
“Yeah, the little snaps that go in the back,” he said, motioning to the back of his shirt.
This was a stunning revalation.
There is proof that some men do deserve a little more credit. Perhaps they will help the others along the way.