

Wisconsin Law (Wis. Adm. Code ch. ATCP 139) bans the sale of children's clothing containing drawstrings in the neck and waist area. Drawstrings can get caught on playground or other equipment, strangling a child. The drawstrings also have the potential of getting caught in vehicle doors, resulting in the child being dragged underneath.

Although the sale of clothing with drawstrings is banned in Wisconsin, you may purchase items out of state, at resale shops or garage sales with drawstrings. You may even have old hand-me-downs with drawstrings. For this reason, we contacted Nancy Zieman from the Sewing with Nancy program on Public Television to demonstrate an easy way to convert clothing items with drawstrings in just 10 minutes.

Based on her program, the following is an easy way for any parent or grandparent to convert children's clothing with drawstrings to elastic enclosures.

*For more information or to file a complaint, visit our website or contact:*

**Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,  
Trade and Consumer Protection**

*Bureau of Consumer Protection*  
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Madison, WI 53708-8911

Email: [DATCPHotline@wi.gov](mailto:DATCPHotline@wi.gov)

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(800) 422-7128 TTY: (608) 224-5058

Drawstring274 (rev 2/19-G)

Bureau of Consumer Protection

# Drawstring Conversion Made Easy

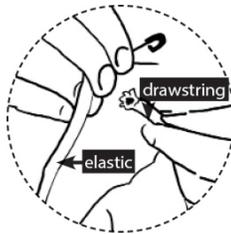


## Supplies you will need:

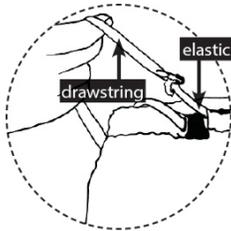
- Safety pin - medium (1)
- Sewing needle (1)
- Thread (color that matches garment)
- Hook & Loop tape (such as Velcro)
- no more than 1 inch in length
- ¼ inch wide elastic
- Stick pins (2)
- Scissors

## Step 1

Cut knots, toggles and other attachments from end of drawstring on one side. On the same side, attach a large safety pin to the end of the string. Attach the safety pin so the small end of the pin will feed into the drawstring channel opening first. Also attach a piece of elastic to the safety pin and drawstring. (To start do not cut the elastic to a specific length. Leave it long enough so it will pull all the way through the drawstring channel.)

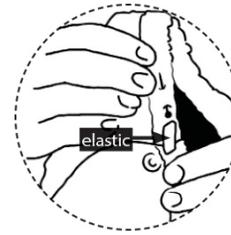


Next feed the pin and elastic through the drawstring channel by pulling out the drawstring from the opposite side of the channel.



Once the elastic reaches the opposite opening, pin the elastic in place. You will then want to try the garment on the child to determine how tight you would like to make the hood or waistband of the garment. Once you have decided on a comfortable fit, pin the other side of the elastic at the opening of the drawstring channel. You can now cut the extra elastic off.

At this point, be sure to discard the drawstring you have just removed from the garment. Be sure to keep it away from small children.

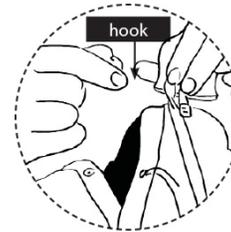


## Step 2

You can now tack the elastic securely in place at the openings. You will want to use thread that matches your garment. You can use a simple hand stitch using your needle and thread. If there is any extra elastic remaining, you can cut it at this time.

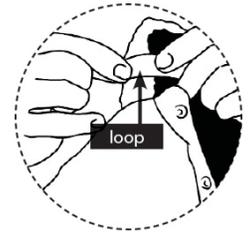
## Step 3

If you are working with a hooded garment, you will want the hood to stay securely in place. You can use a small section of hook and loop tape to accomplish this. First you will want to cut the hook part (rough part). Place this part so it is facing away from the child's skin, at the point you secured the elastic. Before tacking it in place you will want to round off the edge that will stick out from the hood. Simply take your scissors and round out the corners of the upper and lower corners of the tape. This way the hook will not be sharp on the child's chin. Next pin the hook so the tab extends out of the hood and faces outward. You can tack this in place by hand, using your needle and thread.



## Step 4

To attach the loop portion (soft part), place the loop inside the hood on the opposite side of the hook, where you secured the elastic. You will want the loop to face the child's skin. Pin it in place and hand stitch to loop in place around all four edges of the loop.



Congratulations! The conversion is now complete. You have now altered your child's clothing for safety. You can also feel confident in handing it down to younger siblings and grandchildren in the future.



## Other Items to Consider Converting:

- waistband pull cords on coats
- jogging pants
- shorts
- sweatshirt hoods
- winter hats
- shirt collars w/ decorative ties
- swim trunks