

Figure 1B

Figure 1A

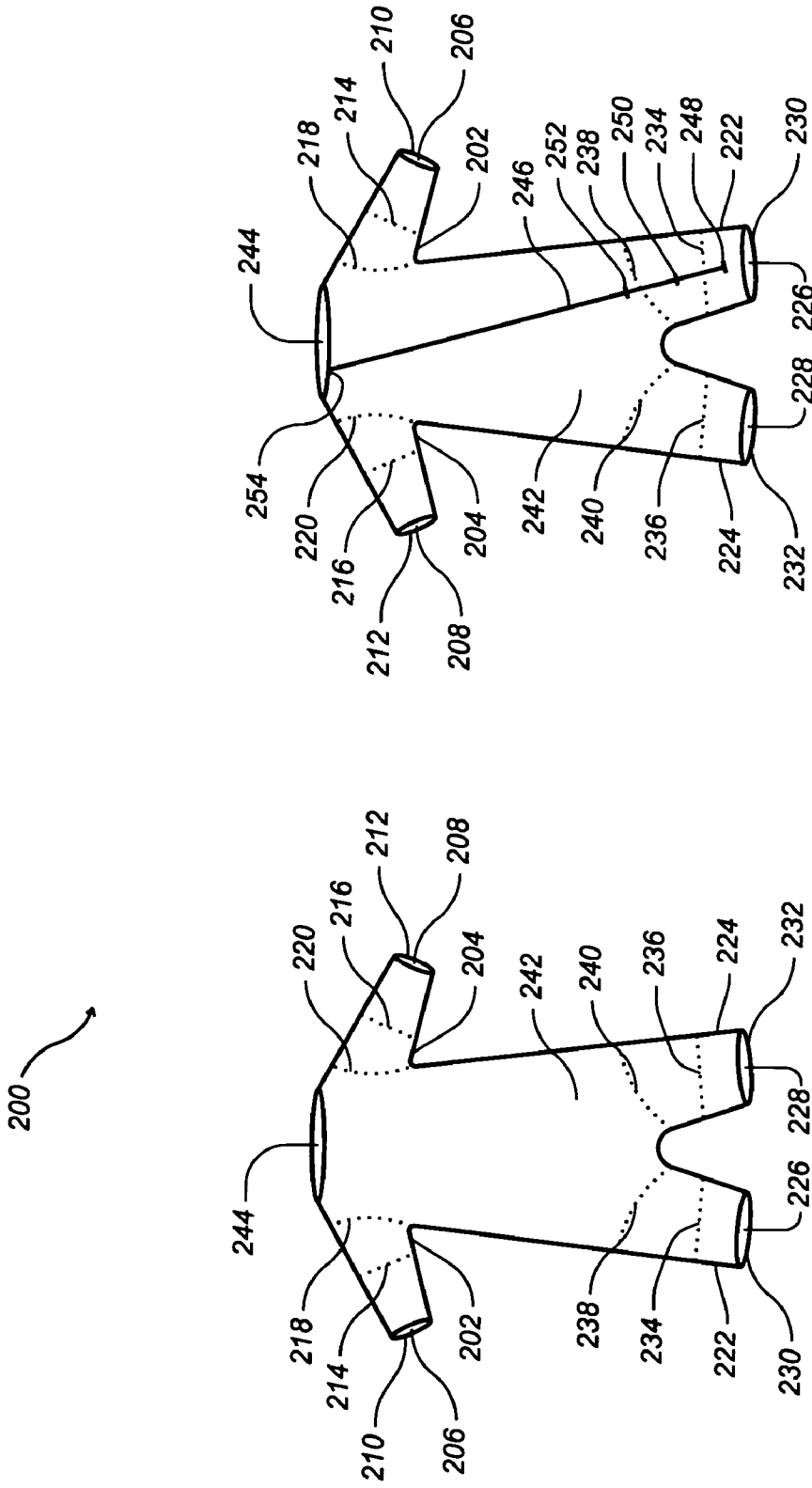


Figure 2B

Figure 2A

CLOTHING AND METHODS FOR FASTENING CLOTHING FOR CHILDREN

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. The Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention relates generally to clothing. More specifically, this invention relates to clothing for children.

[0004] 2. Related Technology

[0005] Textile manufacturing and design is an enormous worldwide industry that continues to grow. Developments in fabrics and clothing material constantly create new and improved uses for fabrics. Moreover, developments in clothing design create new ways of wearing clothing and influence styles of dress the world over.

[0006] Although much of the design of clothing centers on aesthetics, other considerations may also be important. For example, athletic clothing is manufactured using designs and fabrics that may enhance the comfort of the athlete and perhaps even improve performance, without sacrificing aesthetics. Further, outdoor clothing is manufactured using designs and fabrics that will withstand the elements, while at the same time adhering to the current sense of style and fashion.

[0007] Much like athletic clothing and outdoor clothing, children's clothing may be designed with both form and function in mind. Many popular designs of children's clothing have been developed for the comfort and safety of the child, as well as for the ease of parents or other caregivers who dress the child. For example, children's sleepwear is often fabricated using flame retardant fabric that is also soft and comfortable against the skin of a child. Blanket sleepers, as another example, keep small children warm in the night because the sleepers cannot be kicked off like a blanket. Much of children's clothing is also fabricated using comfortable fabrics configured in designs which allow a child to move comfortably and with maximum mobility without being inhibited or bothered by the clothing. Further, the majority of children's clothing is fabricated using fasteners such as snaps, zippers, and other fasteners that provide a quick and easy way for a person dressing a child to fasten and unfasten the clothing.

[0008] Although children's clothing is often fabricated using fasteners that provide a quick and easy way for a person dressing the child to fasten and unfasten the clothing, children themselves are also often able to undo the fasteners in their clothing and undress themselves. When children are able to undo fasteners in their clothing and undress themselves, parents or other care takers must re-dress the child. This can be time consuming as well as frustrating for the parent. Moreover, once a child is able to undress himself, he may undress himself multiple times a day, providing a large amount of work for a parent who must continually re-dress the child. When parents have more than one child who is able to undress himself, the extra effort of dressing a child multiple times a day is compounded.

[0009] What is needed is clothing and methods for fastening clothing that require a person other than a child, such as a parent or other care taker, to dress and undress the child, thus preventing the child from removing his clothing on his own.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] The present invention relates to clothing and methods for fastening clothing for children. An article of children's clothing includes a fastener located on the back of the clothing. When the article of clothing is placed on a child, the child is unable to undo the fastener, and the child is thus incapable of undressing himself. Further, a method for fastening children's clothing includes configuring a fastener such that the fastener is located on the back side of the clothing in such a way as to require a parent or other care taker to undress a child wearing the clothing.

[0011] These and other aspects of the present invention will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, or may be learned by the practice of the invention as set forth hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] To further clarify the above and other aspects of the present invention, a more particular description of the invention will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments thereof which are illustrated in the appended drawings. It is appreciated that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are therefore not to be considered limiting of its scope. The drawings are not drawn to scale. The invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings in which:

[0013] FIG. 1A shows a front view of an article of clothing;

[0014] FIG. 1B shows a rear view of an article of clothing;

[0015] FIG. 2A shows a front view of an article of clothing; and

[0016] FIG. 2B shows a rear view of an article of clothing.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0017] Embodiments of the present invention relate to systems and methods for fastening children's clothing in such a way that a child wearing the clothing is unable to undo the fastener and thereby remove his or her clothing. Fasteners located on the back of children's clothing, as shown in some embodiments of the present invention, are situated so that a child, such as an infant or toddler, is unable to engage the fastener in such a way as to remove the clothing. Thus, according to clothing and methods for fastening clothing as described by the present invention, a child will not be able to remove the clothing without the help of a parent or other party.

[0018] With attention now to FIG. 1A, a front view of article of clothing 100 for a child is shown. Article of clothing 100 may be configured for children of any age, including babies and toddlers, and for children of any size. Sleeves 102 and 104 of article of clothing 100, which substantially cover the arms of a child, have openings 106

and 108, respectively. Mid-portion 110, which connects to sleeves 102 and 104 and covers the torso of a child, includes opening 112. Further, leg portions 114 and 116 also connect to mid-portion 110. Leg portions 114 and 116, having openings 118 and 120, respectively, substantially cover the legs of a child.

[0019] Although in one embodiment of the invention leg portions 114 and 116 have openings 118 and 120, in another embodiment of the invention leg portions 114 and 116 are connected to footed portions, as shown by dotted lines 122 and 124. Dotted lines 122 and 124 show how, in one embodiment of the invention, footed portions cover the feet of a child wearing article of clothing 100.

[0020] While FIG. 1A shows the front view of article of clothing 100 for a child, FIG. 1B shows a rear view, or a view of the back, of the same article of clothing 100. As shown in FIG. 1B, sleeves 102 and 104, having openings 106 and 108, respectively, connect to mid-portion 110, which has an opening 112. Mid-portion 110 further connects to leg portions 114 and 116, which, in one embodiment of the invention, have openings 118 and 120, respectively. In another embodiment of the invention, leg portions 114 and 116 include footed portions to cover the feet of a child wearing article of clothing 100, as shown in FIG. 2B by dotted lines 122 and 124.

[0021] In addition to including those elements as shown in FIG. 1A, Further, FIG. 1B also shows a fastener 126 for fastening the article of clothing 100. In one embodiment of the invention fastener 126 is a zipper. However, it is to be appreciated that fastener 126 may be any fastener, or combination of fasteners, such as, for example, a zipper, snaps, buttons, hook and eye closures, Velcro, ties, or any other fastener.

[0022] Further, fastener 126 extends, in one embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 1B, from an endpoint 128 near the opening 118 of leg portion 114, to an endpoint 130 located at a position near opening 112 of mid-portion 110. Other configurations of fastener 126 are, however, anticipated by embodiments of the present invention. For example, in one embodiment of the invention fastener 126 extends from an endpoint 132, located at a position near the hip portion of article of clothing 100, to a endpoint 130. Further, in other embodiments of the invention endpoint 130 is located at any position in article of clothing 100 near opening 112. In other embodiments of the invention fastener 126 may be configured to be oriented in any fashion across the back of article of clothing 100, with endpoints 128 and 130 located at any position on the back of article of clothing 100.

[0023] Moreover, not only is any configuration of fastener 126 of article of clothing 100 anticipated by embodiments of the present invention, any number of configurations of sleeves 102 and 104 and leg portions 114 and 116 are anticipated by embodiments of the present invention. For example, sleeves 102 and 104 may be configured of any length, such as a length extending to the shoulder of a child, a length extending to the wrist of a child, any length in between a length extending to the shoulder and a length extending to the wrist, and any other length. In addition, leg portions 108 and 110 may also be configured of any length, such as a length extending to the hip of a child, a length covering the feet of the child, any length in between a length

extending to the hip of the child and a length covering the feet of the child, and any other length. Embodiments of the invention showing various configurations of sleeves 102 and 104 and leg portions 114 and 116 of article of clothing 100 are discussed in further detail with reference to FIGS. 2A and 2B.

[0024] Further, it is to be appreciated that any type or style of clothing for children is contemplated by embodiments of the present invention. A fastener, such as fastener 126, located on the back of an article of clothing 100, may be placed in any article of clothing for a child, such as, for example, clothing to be worn while sleeping, clothing to be worn while playing, and any other clothing. Examples of clothing contemplated by embodiments of the present invention include a sleeper, a footed sleeper, a jumpsuit, a playsuit, a romper, a onesie, or any other clothing. Moreover, clothing contemplated by embodiments of the present invention may be made of any fabric or combinations of fabric, such as for example, cotton, polyester, wool, acrylic, fleece, microfleece, flame retardant fabric, or any other fabric.

[0025] In operation, article of clothing 100 is placed on a child by a parent or other person when the fastener 126 is open. The arms of the child are placed in sleeves 102 and 104, with the hands extending through openings 106 and 108. In addition, the legs of the child are placed in leg portions 114 and 116, with the feet extending through openings 118 and 120, and the torso of the child is covered by mid-portion 110, with the neck extending through opening 112. In one embodiment of the invention where article of clothing 100 includes footed portions, as designated by dotted lines 122 and 124, the feet of the child are placed therein. The person dressing the child is able to engage fastener 126, located on the back of the article of clothing 100, and secure the article of clothing 100 on the child. In one embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 1B, the fastener 126 is a zipper and is closed by pulling the zipper from endpoint 128, where the zipper 126 is open, to position shown by endpoint 130, where the zipper 126 is closed.

[0026] While the person dressing the child is able to engage fastener 126 and secure the article of clothing 100 on the child, the child is unable to undo the fastener 126, due to the configuration of the fastener 126. Thus, a child wearing article of clothing 100 is unable to undress himself. In order to remove article of clothing 100 from the child, a parent or other person must undo the fastener 126 of article of clothing 100.

[0027] With attention now to FIG. 2A, a front view of article of clothing 200 is shown. In one embodiment of the invention, article of clothing 200 is an article of clothing for children, such as, for example, infants and toddlers. Article of clothing 200 includes sleeves 202 and 204, having openings 206 and 208, respectively. In one embodiment of the invention, sleeves 202 and 204 extend to a length designated by solid lines 210 and 212, respectively. Solid lines 210 and 212 correspond to a length of sleeves 202 and 204 ending approximately at the elbow of a child wearing article of clothing 200. In another embodiment of the invention, sleeves 202 and 204 extend to a length above the elbow of a child wearing article of clothing 200, as designated by dotted lines 214 and 216. In addition, in one embodiment of the invention sleeves 202 and 204 extend to

a length ending approximately at the shoulder of a child wearing article of clothing **200**, as designated by dotted lines **218** and **220**. Although several embodiments of the invention showing different lengths of sleeves **202** and **204** are shown in FIG. 2A, it is to be appreciated that any length of sleeves **202** and **204** is included in embodiments of the present invention.

[0028] In addition to sleeves **202** and **204**, article of clothing **200** includes leg portions **222** and **224**, having openings **226** and **228**, respectively. In one embodiment of the invention, leg portions **222** and **224** extend to a length designated by solid lines **230** and **232**. Solid lines **230** and **232** correspond to a length of leg portions **222** and **224** ending approximately at the knee of a child wearing article of clothing **200**. Further, in one embodiment of the invention leg portions **222** and **224** extend to a length above the knee of a child wearing article of clothing **200**, as designated by dotted lines **234** and **236**.

[0029] Finally, in yet another embodiment of the invention leg portions **222** and **224** extend to a length ending approximately at the hip of a child wearing article of clothing **200**, as designate by dotted lines **238** and **240**. Although several embodiments of the invention showing different lengths of leg portions **222** and **224** of article of clothing **200**, embodiments of the present invention include any length of leg portions **222** and **224**. Moreover, embodiments of the present invention also include any combination of any length of leg portions **222** and **224** with any length of sleeves **202** and **204**. For example, in one embodiment of the invention leg portions **222** and **224** may have a length corresponding to solid lines **230** and **232**, respectively, with sleeves **202** and **204** having lengths corresponding to dotted lines **218** and **220**, respectively.

[0030] In addition to sleeves **202** and **204** and leg portions **222** and **224**, article of clothing **200** further includes mid-portion **242**. Mid-portion **242**, having an opening **244**, covers the torso of a child wearing article of clothing **200**.

[0031] With attention now to FIG. 2B, a rear view, or view of the back, of article of clothing **200** is shown. FIG. 2B includes sleeves **202** and **204**, having openings **206** and **208**, respectively, leg portions **222** and **224**, having openings **226** and **228**, respectively, and mid-portion **242**, having opening **244**. Each of these elements shown in FIG. 2B corresponds to a like numbered element of the article of clothing as shown in FIG. 2A, the difference being that the view shown in FIG. 2B is from the rear of article of clothing **200** and the view shown in FIG. 2A is from the front of article of clothing **200**.

[0032] Like FIG. 2A, FIG. 2B also shows solid lines **210** and **212**, and dotted lines **214** and **216**, and **218** and **220**. Solid lines **210** and **212**, dotted lines **214** and **216**, and dotted lines **218** and **220** show possible lengths of sleeves **202** and **204** in various embodiments of the invention. Likewise, FIG. 2B also shows lengths of leg portions **222** and **224**, in various embodiments of the invention, as designated by solid lines **230** and **232**, dotted lines **234** and **236**, and dotted lines **238** and **240**.

[0033] In addition to showing the lengths of sleeves **202** and **204** and the lengths of leg portions **222** and **224** in various embodiments of the invention, FIG. 2B also shows fastener **246** located on the rear of article of clothing **200**. In

one embodiment of the invention fastener **246** is a zipper. However, it is to be appreciated that fastener **246** may be any fastener or combination of fasteners, such as, for example, a zipper, buttons, snaps, Velcro, ties, hook and eye closures, or any other fastener.

[0034] Further, fastener **246** may be configured in any number of ways in the back of article of clothing **200**. For example, in one embodiment of the invention where leg portion **222** extends to a length as shown by solid line **230**, endpoint **248** designates an end point of fastener **246**. In another embodiment of the invention, where leg portion **222** extends to a length as shown by dotted line **234**, endpoint **250** designates an end point of fastener **246**. Similarly, in another embodiment of the invention where leg portion **222** extends to a length as shown by dotted line **238**, endpoint **252** designates an end point of fastener **246**. As shown in FIG. 2B, fastener **246** extends from one of end points **248**, **250**, or **252** to end point **254** located at a position near opening **244** of mid-portion **242**.

[0035] Although FIG. 2B shows embodiments of the present invention showing fastener **246** extending from one of end points **248**, **250**, or **252** to end point **254**, it is to be appreciated that any configuration of fastener **246** on the back of article of clothing **200** is possible. For example, in some embodiments of the invention fastener **246** may extend from an end point on leg portion **222** to an end point near opening **244** of mid-portion **242**. In other embodiments of the invention fastener **246** may extend from an end point near opening **244** of mid-portion **242** to any position near leg portions **222** or any position near leg portion **224**. In short, any configuration of fastener **246**, including end points at any location on the back of article of clothing **200** as shown in FIG. 2B, are included in embodiments of the present invention.

[0036] In operation, a child is placed in article of clothing **200**, when the fastener **246** is open, by inserting his arms into sleeves **202** and **204**, with the arms of the child extending through openings **206** and **208**. Similarly, the legs of the child are placed in leg portions **222** and **224**, with the feet of the child extending through openings **226** and **228**. When the arms of the child are placed in sleeves **202** and **204**, and the legs of the child are placed in leg portions **222** and **224**, mid-portion **242** covers the torso of the child, with the neck of the child extending through opening **244**. A parent or other person is then able to engage fastener **246**, located on the back of article of clothing **200**, and fasten the child into article of clothing **246**. However, the configuration of fastener **246** is such that a child wearing article of clothing **200** is unable to engage the fastener and remove the clothing without the help of a parent or other person. Thus, embodiments of the present invention provide clothing that a child cannot remove by himself. Further, embodiments of the present invention provide methods of fastening clothing that prevent a child from removing clothing by himself.

[0037] The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

- 1. Clothing for children, comprising:
fabric configured to cover one or more parts of a body of a child; and
a fastener, wherein the fastener is located on a portion of the fabric covering a back of the child, the fastener extending from a position near a leg portion of the clothing to a position near a neck opening of the clothing.
- 2. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the fastener is substantially comprised of one or more of: zippers; snaps; buttons; hook and loop fasteners; hook and eye closures; and ties.
- 3. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the clothing is configured for an infant.
- 4. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the clothing is configured for a toddler.
- 5. (canceled)
- 6. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the clothing is one or more of: a sleeper; a footed sleeper; a jumpsuit; a romper; a onesie; and, a playsuit.
- 7. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the fabric is comprised of one or more of: cotton; polyester; wool; acrylic; fleece; microfleece; flame retardant fabric; and, waterproof fabric.
- 8. Clothing for children, comprising:
one or more sleeves;
a mid-portion having a neck opening and connected to the one or more sleeves; one or more leg portions connected to the mid portion; and
a fastener, the fastener configured to be located on a back side of the clothing such that the fastener extends from

- a position near the one or more leg portions of the clothing to a position near the neck opening of the clothing.
- 9-10. (canceled)
- 11. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the fastener is one or more of: a zipper; buttons; snaps; hook and loop fasteners; ties; and, hook and eye closures.
- 12. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the one or more leg portions include one or more footed portions.
- 13. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the clothing is at least one of: a sleeper; a footed sleeper; a jumpsuit; a romper; a onesie; and, a playsuit.
- 14. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the clothing is made of fabric.
- 15. The clothing as recited in claim 16, wherein the fabric is comprised of one or more of: cotton; polyester; wool; acrylic; fleece; microfleece; flame retardant fabric; and, waterproof fabric.
- 16. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the clothing is configured for at least one of: an infant; and, a toddler.
- 19-21. (canceled)
- 20. The clothing as recited in claim 1, wherein the position near the leg portion of the clothing is at least one of: an ankle position; a knee position; a hip position; and, a buttocks position.
- 21. The clothing as recited in claim 8, wherein the position near the one or more leg portions of the clothing is at least one of: an ankle position; a knee position; a hip position; and, a buttocks position.

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