

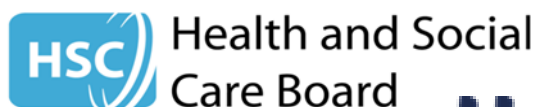
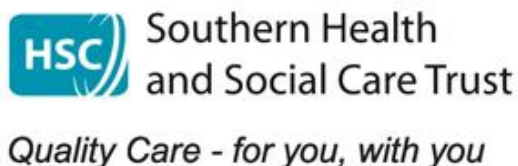
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES – BUILDING SERVICES FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Information Pack



1. STEP BY STEP GUIDE
2. 10 STEPS TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE
3. TOP TIPS
4. SAMPLES: PEN PICTURE, RISK ASSESSMENTS, PICTURE SCHEDULE
5. INFORMATION LEAFLETS

WITH THANKS TO:



Step by Step Guide to help you make your Service more accessible to Children and Young People with Disabilities



1. Ensure your venue is accessible;
2. Staff are willing to learn and train to work with Children and Young People with disabilities;
3. Identify training needs and contact local Community Access Officer in Health and Social Care Trust who will provide contact details (see below) on accessing the appropriate Training (Eg Disability Awareness Training);
4. Publicise your service as an accessible service for children and young people with a disability within your community and with the Community Access Officers;
5. Once child/young person with disability is known to your service get to know them, complete pen picture, identify any child specific training required (moving and handling, epilepsy, risk assessment training etc) and contact Community Access Officer for training advice - share pen picture with staff working with the child/ young person to ensure a full understanding of their needs (see pen picture examples in pack);
6. Consider, where appropriate, to undertake an assessment of need (identifying any hazards or risks) together with the child/ young person and family (see examples in pack);
7. If the assessment identifies any reasonable adjustments, arrange to put these in place in liaison with the family and/or Community Access Officer;
8. To assist with your service being more inclusive to children and young people with a disability refer to the “10 Steps to be More Inclusive” in your pack;
9. Monitor and review in partnership with the child / young person with a disability and their family how your service is continuously seeking to meet their needs, participation and enjoyment of your service.

Community Access Officers Armagh and Dungannon Area:- Tel 028 37564350

Eileen Hart: eileen.hart@southerntrust.hscni.net

Patricia Kelly: patricia.kelly@southerntrust.hscni.net

10 Steps to be more inclusive



Identify issues
and provide support



Small changes make
BIG differences



Ask me about me!



Provide opportunities so
I can plan my future



Let my voice be
heard and take my
views seriously



Provide easy read guides
with images & less words



I'm a child first, my
disability comes second



With a little support,
anything is possible



Consider that I might need
more space to move or
feel comfortable



Research my Disability

Made by Children and Young People from The Sixth Sense Group at
Barnardo's Disabled Children and Young People's Participation Project.
For more information contact DCYPPP on 02837414541.

**Believe in
children**
 **Barnardo's**
Northern Ireland

Top Tips when working with a Child / Young Person with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) including Asperger's Syndrome



Autism is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them.

- ❖ Be aware of personal space. A person with ASD may have sensitivity to touch and even the experience of someone lightly brushing past them can be overwhelming for them.
- ❖ If you ask a person with ASD a question and they don't respond or find it difficult to make eye contact, show kindness and remove the pressure for them to respond immediately.
- ❖ If a person with ASD is feeling overwhelmed, ask them if they are alright and if there is anything you could do to help, or just give them space and time to deal with the situation.
- ❖ Be aware of sensory needs. It may not be a question of rudeness if someone needs to move seats or open a window; it may be that a particular smell, visual stimulus, or noise is overstimulating them.

Other Tips:

Whether you're at the shops, on public transport, at work or out with friends, a change as simple as using clear language, having a bit of patience, or avoiding last minute changes can really help. Understand the person, Autism and the change you can make.

The meaning of some key words:-

1. Feeling Overwhelmed

Be aware that when a person with ASD can get overwhelmed by everything around them, and may begin to shout, scream, cry or lose control.

What can you do?

Spare a moment and try not to judge. Be patient, calmly ask if they're OK and give them some time and space to recover.

2. Sensory overload

People with ASD can be sensitive to lights, sounds, smells and sights. This can lead to an overload – and feeling overwhelmed.

What can you do?

Make some space, eg a quiet room. Lots of little things can add up to an overload of sensory information, meaning little things from you can cut this down. Try to avoid talking over each other, turn down your music, or even just offer to dim glaring lights.

3. Unexpected changes

The world can be an unpredictable, confusing place for people with ASD, and that makes a set routine crucial for getting by. So when something unexpected still happens, it can feel like the whole world is spinning out of control.

What can you do?

Give some warning, eg prepare a picture schedule/outline of the day. The best way for a person with ASD to deal with unexpected changes is to let them know in advance.

4. Social anxiety

Trying to understand what others mean and how to behave can be exhausting and stressful for people with ASD, causing many to end up feeling excluded and isolated.

What can you do?

Take an interest. Invite them to join in as much as they feel they want to. And if they're struggling, just offer some support.

5. Processing time

Sometimes people with ASD feel like they're getting 'too much information' and need a few moments to filter through it all. This is called processing time.

What can you do?

Give a minute. Ask one question as simply as you can, and just wait. If you still don't get a response, try rephrasing it or writing it down instead.

More information is available on the internet at, for example

<http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/top-tips.aspx>

<http://www.autismni.org/>

<http://www.autism.org.uk/>

Useful Links



[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/northernireland.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/northernireland.htm)

Barnardo's NI works for children first and last. In over 100 years we have helped improve the lives and opportunities of tens of thousands of children in communities across Northern Ireland. We work wherever children need us most.

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/>

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) is the UK's leading charity supporting blind and partially sighted people. They offer practical and emotional support to those that need it, so they can continue living life to the full.

<http://www.ndcs.org.uk/>

The National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/>

The Multiple Sclerosis Society provides advice and support on all issues related to MS. It's thought that around 5-10% of people with MS experienced their first symptoms before the age of 16.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

Mencap are a passionate group of people committed to changing the world for everyone with a learning disability.

<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/involved/branches/nireland>

Epilepsy can affect anyone at any age and from any walk of life.

<https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/>

Here you will find answers to questions that we are often asked about Down's syndrome. This information will help you to separate the facts from some common misconceptions.

<http://www.dsni.co.uk/>

Disability Sport NI is Northern Ireland's main disability sports charity working to improve the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities through sport and active recreation.

<https://www.disabilityaction.org/>

Disability Action is a Northern Ireland charity who works with people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, sensory disabilities, hidden disabilities and mental health disabilities.

<https://www.carersuk.org/northernireland>

Providing information, training and support to those in a caring role.

<http://www.cedar-foundation.org/>

The Cedar Foundation supports individuals and families living with disability, autism & brain injury to live the lives they choose.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Mind is a UK wide mental health charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

<https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition>

The U.S. National Library of Medicine website; giving details of hundreds of common and rarer conditions that can affect children, young people and adults.



PEN PICTURE

H & C No: _____

NAME:	ADDRESS:	Photo
Date of Birth:		
<u>HEALTH & DISABILITY ISSUES:</u> What is your child's confirmed diagnosis? [i.e. Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Learning Disability etc.]		
Mobility issues / support required?		
Mental Health Difficulties:		
Communication:		
Behaviour Difficulties:		
Medication:		
Applicant's Hobbies:		

Interests: Likes: Dislikes:	
Any Risks Identified	
Any Reasonable Adjustments required: e.g. quiet room /space if anxious; supervision needs	
Any Other Information:	

EDUCATION	
School Attended: Tel. No: Address: Teacher: Principal: TEL NO	
Is Child or young Person in receipt of any other services? <i>(If yes give details)</i>	Yes/No

Any Other professional/s involved:

Name:

Status:

What does the Child/ Young Person feel they would like to gain from your services (also include parents view):

Any Other Relevant Information

Is Child / Young Person aware of referral: Yes/No

Parent/Carer:

Name:

Contact details:

SIGNED: _____

POSITION _____

DATE: _____

INDIVIDUAL CHILD / YOUNG PERSON RISK ASSESSMENT

This form is for Guidance only and the sections can be adapted to the needs of your own service.

As completed forms may contain sensitive personal information, for compliance with the Data Protection Act; the circulation and access must be limited to those who have a right and need to see them. Do not store in an open access area. Services should have in place a recording protocol covering how personal data is managed securely. This would include taking information off the premises or it being shared with carers, volunteers, etc. All workers should receive data protection training relevant to their role. This risk assessment must clearly identify what information is needed by carers, volunteers, etc. to keep the child/young person safe.

Service:			Region/Nation/BL:	
Assessor:		Job Title:	Assessment Date:	Next Review Date:
Child/Young Person Name:			Gender:	Date of Birth:
Parent/Carer Name:			Date:	
Name(s) of Key Worker(s) (if applicable):				
Emergency Contacts Including Family Members, GP and Hospital (include NHS number where appropriate):				
Key Significant Risks identified for Child/Young Person and Summary of Controls:				

Factors	Information and Comments	Current Controls and Action Plan		
Health Issues, Medical Conditions and Disabilities Examples (not exhaustive): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADHD • Asthma • Blood Disorders • Cancer • Developmental • Diabetes • Dyslexia • Epilepsy • Heart Disease • Liver • Renal • Sensory • Sickle Cell • Skin • Thyroid 		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
Behaviours/Characteristics Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • absconding • aggressive/challenging • anti-social • anxiety • calmness • compliant • cooperative • hyperactive • isolated/inward-looking • moody • obsessive • relaxed • sensitive • unresponsive 		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

General Mobility Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• agility• assistance needed• balance• coordination/dexterity• fitness/stamina• ramps• size• stairs• walking		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
General Ability Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• challenges• communication• eyesight• general safety equipment• hearing• special furniture• strengths• understanding• vulnerabilities		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

Moving and Transferring Refer to individual moving and handling assessment. Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">existing equipmentany extra needed		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
Invasive, Intimate and Other Care Needs Refer to any Individual Care Plan the family may already have.		Current Controls:		
		Further Controls Needed:		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

<p>Medication</p> <p>Do workers need training in the care of medicines and/or the administration of medication?</p> <p>Do any of the person's medications have any serious side-effects?</p> <p>Are there any arrangements necessary for the suitable and/or secure storage of medication?</p> <p>Include emergency arrangements if the child/young person is at risk of an overdose. If an approved antidote is available, e.g. Naloxone, who will hold it and be trained to administer?</p>		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
<p>Provision for First Aid</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health needs • disabilities • emergency medication • allergies, e.g. plasters, latex <p>Do first aiders require any special training, e.g. in enhanced paediatric first aid?</p>		<p>Further Controls Needed</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
		<p>Further Controls Needed</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

<p>Awareness of Danger</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dangerous behaviour • dogs/other animals • risk taking • road sense • stranger danger 		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
<p>Allergies to Food, Drink or Other Substances</p> <p>Examples: Nut allergy Hay Fever</p>		<p>Further Controls Needed:</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
		<p>Further Controls Needed:</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
<p>Special Feeding Needs or Dietary Requirements</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nasogastric • gastrostomy • drip 		<p>Further Controls Needed:</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

<p>Travel sense and needs</p> <p>Is anything necessary to keep the person safe in cars, on public transport, cycling, walking, running, etc?</p> <p>Examples: Child Safety Seats Restraints</p>		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
		<p>Further Controls Needed:</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
<p>Supervision Arrangements and Ratios</p> <p>Are any special supervision arrangements necessary in some circumstances?</p>		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
		<p>Further Controls Needed:</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date
<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>If a person feels uncomfortable about something someone has said/done do they know what to do?</p> <p>Is the Person able to understand leaflet/code of conduct/learning course? If not what steps will be taken to ensure they are neither vulnerable to abuse nor pose a risk to others?</p>		<p>Current Controls:</p>		
		<p>Further Controls Needed</p>		
		By When	By Whom	Review Date

CHILDREN'S DISABILITY - RISK ASSESSMENT

Name of Service User: _____

Next of Kin: _____

Name of Key Worker: _____

Names of professionals involved in completing risk assessment:

Description of Risk	Who is at Risk	Likelihood & Frequency of Risk	Impact / Consequence	Category of Risk	Strength Inherent	Action / Management Plan
Physical / Medical						

Key – Likelihood A - Almost certain, B - Likely, C - Possible, D - Unlikely, E - Rare

Consequence 1 - Catastrophic, 2 - Major, 3 - Moderate, 4 - Minor, 5 - Insignificant

Description of Risk	Who is at Risk	Likelihood & Frequency of Risk	Impact / Consequence	Category of Risk	Strength Inherent	Action / Management Plan
Social / Resource						

Description of Risk	Who is at Risk	Likelihood & Frequency of Risk	Impact / Consequence	Category of Risk	Strength Inherent	Action / Management Plan
Environmental / Life Styles						

Description of Risk	Who is at Risk	Likelihood & Frequency of Risk	Impact / Consequence	Category of Risk	Strength Inherent	Action / Management Plan
Emotional / Psychological						

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Key Worker

To be completed by Manager.

Action / management plan adequate to meet assessed risks. Yes / No

Further action to be taken / issues to be considered.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Team Leader

SAMPLE PICTURE SCHEDULE



Charis



Youth Club



At



Youth Club



I can



choose

to do



cookery



art



sports



sensory room



white room



ipad



in the

cool

room.



I can have crisps

and a



drink.



At



the end



I



go to



circle time.



Then

I



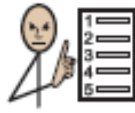
go



home.



Child's name



Rules for Charis Youth Club



Child's name



will



do

activities and have



fun.



Child's name



will



not



open



drawers

or



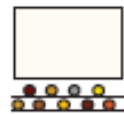
cupboards.



There are no



no



movies



at



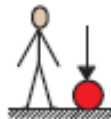
Charis.



Child's name



will



stay



with



his helper.



Child's name



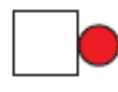
will



go



home



after



group time.

How you can make your resources accessible to deaf children and young people

There are more than 45,000 deaf children and young people in the UK, and four more babies are born deaf every day. Many of these children will want to access the information you provide, just like other children.

It is important for your organisation to think carefully of the needs of your audience so that they can get the most out of what you're offering. Some children and young people, including those who are deaf¹, will have difficulty accessing your information.

This factsheet has been created by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) to help you provide information that is inclusive to deaf children and young people. The suggestions made in this guidance will also make your content more engaging and useful for other children and young people.

¹ For information on how to make your content accessible to deafblind children, please contact Sense.

***NDCS uses the word 'deaf' to refer to all levels of hearing loss.**

What does it mean to be deaf?

Deafness in childhood has a major impact on the acquisition of spoken language which is critical to a child's social, emotional and intellectual development.

Deafness therefore will impact on a range of skills that children need to learn, including; language development; literacy skills and incidental learning (such as learning by overhearing others).

Deaf children and young people can do anything other children can do, given the right support. As the reading age of many deaf children is still substantially lower than hearing children of the same age, the onus is on you to think of the best possible way to deliver information to them.

How do deaf children and young people communicate?

There are a number of ways that a deaf child may learn to communicate and this will have an effect on how they receive and process information.

Some children will have learned to communicate using **British Sign Language (BSL)**. BSL is a language of its own, which uses different grammar and word order to English, and involves making signs using the hands. It has a different word order to English and is a visual language.

Others will have used **cued speech**, which uses hand shapes to represent the sounds of English visually or **Sign Supported English (SSE)** which utilises signs from BSL but with English word order or a combination of various modes of communication called **Total Communication**.

Some will have practised **using their residual hearing** well enough to develop good listening and speaking skills, or will use **lipreading** to read words from the lip patterns of the person speaking.

Many children will use a combination of all of these to communicate. Whichever method a deaf child uses, it's important to be aware that the written word may present difficulties.

Deaf children are often reliant on family, friends or professionals to give them information, and so it is important that as they get older they are able to access information themselves, rather than someone else doing it for them.



How to make your online content more accessible

The following tips will help to make your content accessible for deaf young people, but will also make it more appealing to other young people.

Put yourself in their shoes

- ❖ What age range are you speaking to – children or teenagers?
- ❖ What is going on in their lives at school, home or in friendship groups?
- ❖ Would including a deaf character in the resource appeal to your audience?

Know what you want to say and be clear in saying it

- ❖ Have one main message and break it down into simple steps, such as 'Fill in the form. Email it to us'.
- ❖ A deaf child or young person may need assistance to carry out an instruction.
- ❖ Add something simple like 'ask an adult to help you out', for example.

Keep it simple

- ❖ Use easier words, like *place* instead of *venue*; *help* instead of *facilitate*; *start* instead of *commence*.
- ❖ Keep it short and snappy. For example, 'The course is available to young people and consists of six sessions designed to promote positive mental health and good emotional well-being' can be turned into 'Angry? Sad? Excited? Come and talk about your feelings.'
- ❖ Try to avoid confusing language, such as idioms like 'it's raining cats and dogs'. This is hard for deaf young people to understand.

Think visually

- ❖ Think about the layout of your page. Large blocks of text are unappealing and your reader will switch off.
- ❖ Use images, animation and colour to illustrate what you want to say.
- ❖ Pull out key information using box-outs, sub-headings, bullet points and bold font.
- ❖ Video and animation can bring a subject to life, especially for deaf children and young people who may be more used to communicating visually. Videos or animations should have captions/subtitles and be accompanied by a transcript. It is also preferable to offer British Sign Language (BSL) translation.

Want feedback?

Ask your audience for feedback on the information you provide by adding a feedback form or button to your website.

Good practice examples

The following websites can be used as examples of how you could present your information in an interesting and accessible way. However, they may not be fully accessible to deaf children and young people.

www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/onlinestuff/BSL_content/BSL_climate_science.aspx

uses animation to convey important information.

www.cybermentors.org.uk

uses animation and colour to offer variety and hook in the user.



www.wordle.net

creates 'word clouds' which allows you to present text in a visually interesting way.



www.puzzledout.com

encourages children and young people to be interactive and have their say.

www.talktofrank.com

uses interactive content to engage young people with the subject of drugs.



www.buzz.org.uk

uses interactive tools, such as hot polls, an event map and games to provide a fun experience for deaf children and young people.



www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexandyoungpeople/Pages/Sex-and-young-people-hub.aspx

shows young people telling their own stories.

www.thesite.org

uses bold imagery to signpost content.



www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Deafzone/Pages/Deafzone.aspx

has lots of BSL video content to bring information to life and be accessible to BSL users.

Producing new video content for children and young people

If you're creating a video with children and young people in mind, think about how much information they will be able to process. If you're trying to convey a lot of information, it will need to be done in an accessible way.

Using imagery, cartoons, animation, flick-through books, picture stories etc. and breaking up information into small, manageable sections, rather than someone talking for a long time into the camera, is more likely to make an impact.

Showing emotions and body language are important to let deaf children know what is happening.

Holding up placards, other visual clues and making a clear change in topic are all helpful devices to use.

Bring your content to life by producing engaging and vibrant content, such as this video produced for deaf young people on choices after school: <http://youngpeople.ndcsbuzz.org.uk/topics/ref:N4F74605602A3D/title:How+many+of+you+are+there%3F/>.

Include deaf children and children with other disabilities in your videos. It's important to show positive role models.

Finding the right service

Video production companies will be able to consult with you on what visual techniques will engage your target audience.

If you want to add subtitles or BSL translation to your video content, try searching online to find the right service for you. The following organisations are just a few offering various services:

- Deaf Friendly Business Solutions
- ITV SignPost
- Red Bee Media
- Remark!
- Sign Solutions

Making video content accessible for deaf children and young people

If you already have video content in place but want to make sure that deaf users can access it, subtitling and/or British Sign Language (BSL) translation are two options available to you. Remember in addition to provide a transcript for your video.

Subtitles

The terms 'caption' and 'subtitle' have similar definitions. Captions commonly refer to on-screen text specifically designed for deaf viewers, and include descriptions of sounds and music. Subtitles are straight transcriptions or translations of dialogue. For the purposes of this guidance, we have chosen to use the more commonly known term 'subtitle'.

Having subtitles can help any child or young person to understand what is being said on screen, not just deaf users.

Subtitling your video content is relatively straightforward and can mean the difference between a deaf young person being able to access your message or not.

There are some free subtitling applications available on the internet, which can be used for adding subtitles to your videos in-house. This can be time consuming and often inaccurate, so it is preferable to pay a professional company to subtitle your content.

The following article is one example of guidance on how to add subtitles and transcripts to your content: <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/static.py?hl=en&page=guide.cs&guide=2734661>

BSL translation

British Sign Language (BSL) is a language in its own right, with its own rules and grammar. BSL is the language of the UK Deaf community and it is estimated that about 50,000–70,000 people use it as their first or preferred language. For those children who use BSL as their language of choice, offering BSL translation is a must. Offering BSL translation on your video content is quick and relatively inexpensive to do. It will also show deaf people how seriously you take accessibility into account.

Why is accessibility important?

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010, replacing the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995. The Act makes clear that it is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person because of their disability, unless this behaviour can be justified.

The Act states it is against the law to

- refuse to serve a disabled person
- offer a disabled person a service that is not as good as a service being offered to a non-disabled person
- provide a service to a disabled person on different terms to those given to a non-disabled person
- provide goods or services in a way that makes it unreasonably difficult or impossible for a disabled person to use the goods or service.

It is good practice and the responsibility of each organisation to take reasonable steps to provide information in an accessible format, such as subtitles and BSL. By making your content accessible in this way, you could potentially widen your audience to include over 45,000 deaf children and young people across the UK.

Any queries?

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) is here to help you if you have any further queries on accessibility for deaf children and young people.

If you have a question or you'd like to give us feedback, please contact us at cyp@ndcs.org.uk or check out our website for more information: www.ndcs.org.uk.



Toys & Play for children who are Blind or partially sighted



Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) estimates that there are around 25,000 children in Britain under the age of 16 whose severe sight problems affect their education.

The term 'visual impairment' refers to children who are either blind or partially sighted.

- 'Blind' means a high degree of vision loss, seeing much less than is typical or perhaps nothing at all. Most blind children can see something (light and dark, or movement), but not very much
- 'Partial sight' is a less severe loss of vision which cannot be corrected by wearing spectacles though they might help to make vision better.

Most blind or partially sighted children have their sight problem from birth. A small number of children lose their sight through illness or accident.

A high proportion (estimated 40%) of blind and partially sighted children have additional needs, including learning, movement and communication difficulties.

Choosing the right types of toys

Using the criteria below when selecting toys will encourage children to develop their skills while having fun at the same time. Both are equally important! The criteria are intended to make best use of any residual vision, and to develop other sensory skills such as the sense of touch, which is important for children who will learn to read in braille.

Try to select a toy that:

- Has good colour and tone contrast such as yellow edging for each hole on a blue shape sorter to make the different shapes easier to locate
- Has bold and clear lettering which is easier to see such as bold black

numbers on a white background for a play clock

- Reflects light or is fluorescent such as diffractive paper with a torch to attract your child's attention or a pull along toy with flashing lights
- Encourages children to use their eyes to follow an object such as wind up toys that move slowly across a surface to develop a child's tracking skills
- Encourages development of hand-eye co-ordination such as posting boxes or sand trays with pourers and scoopers so that your child is able to look and reach more accurately
- Encourages good co-ordination of hands, using both hands together such as construction toys with blocks or bricks that fit together and pull apart to build up strength and dexterity
- Encourages development of fine finger control that your child may need if they read through touch e.g. toy pianos or plasticine with a variety of tools or a washing line and pegs
- Has an interesting texture which offers some variety to touch which is easier to discriminate such as an elephant with





LOOK OUT FOR THIS SYMBOL!

Toys with this symbol contain small parts that could be swallowed and cause a choking hazard. They should only be given to children over 3 years or of a more advanced development.

Toys & Play for children who are **blind or partially sighted**



different textured parts: corduroy feet, leather body, chain tail and a crinkly trunk so that your child can tell the difference between different textures and surfaces

- Has moving parts that encourage little fingers to explore e.g. activity cubes or an abacus
- Has discrete pieces that can be discriminated by touch e.g. a wooden puzzle board which has different shaped pieces with clear contrasting edges
- Has switches that are recognisable by touch as on or off, and click when operated so that a child knows what they have done e.g. toy cookers that have knobs that click or toy vacuum cleaners
- Encourages understanding of cause and effect e.g. rattles for hands or feet that encourage your child to move to

make a noise or a drum and beater

- Makes a sound or other cue to an action having occurred so that your child knows that they have made something happen, such as a work bench with nuts that click when you use the screwdriver

- Encourages physical play e.g. push along toys like prams or trolleys, and trundle trikes so that your child is confident to move around
- Encourages development of sense of smell such as smelly pens and crayons or scented water for water play so that your child begins to use smell as an extra cue to find things or to know where they are.



Creating a play environment for your child

Toys and play materials are an important way of enabling children to discover a variety of sensory experiences.

The following play tips will help maximise your child's development whilst making them feel safe and comfortable:

- Give your child plenty of time to explore new things. It takes much longer to understand and process how a toy works by touch than it does by looking at it
- All children need opportunities to experience challenge, risk and excitement in a way that is appropriate for them
- It is essential to watch and listen to your child's reactions (filming your child can be a useful tool for this) to work out what stimulates them and what they enjoy
- Talk to your specialist teacher for children with visual impairment* about colour, contrast, lighting and using plain backgrounds. Try to find out if your child sees better on one side, or if objects should be presented in a particular position
- Make sure that your child is in the most suitable position to use their hands and eyes to best advantage, whether seated, standing or lying
- Define and limit the play space around your child to create a "den" or secure familiar base to play
- Keep toys within easy reach so that your child's movements can create an effect. This might mean suspending toys above a child lying down, or putting objects in a table-top tray or shallow box
- If toys roll out of reach, try to take your child to the toy, rather than bringing the toy back to your child. This will develop searching and mobility skills
- Use language that is simple, short and descriptive and relates to what your child is doing
- If your child has repeated behaviours, try to develop them into a more creative activity
- Your child needs different partners, spaces, materials and objects for play. If you build on what your child is interested in, you will encourage them to try new things, feel confident to face future challenges and take with them a great attitude to learning.

*Contact RNIB Helpline on **0303 123 9999** for the contact details of your local specialist teacher. For more information visit **www.rnib.org.uk**



Growing through different types of play

Children develop through play from birth. Different types of play can help to develop a range of skills. Blind and partially sighted children may have to work harder to use their visual skills, which can be tiring. Also, they may be more reliant on their tactile and listening skills than other children as they grow and learn.

Exploratory play encourages the use of motor skills, stimulates the senses of touch, hearing and vision, and introduces cause and effect. It extends children's interest in their environment and encourages them to make sense of the world around by being curious, experimenting and making connections.

Imaginary/pretend play enables children to act out roles and situations that are familiar and unfamiliar to them. They can practise daily routines like shopping and cooking and explore fantasy ideas by dressing up. Children need experience of real things before they understand 'toy' versions.

Constructing and creating enables your child to express their thoughts,

ideas and feelings and to develop an understanding of different objects, materials and tools. This can be through arts and crafts, movement and dance, sound and music, building things and taking them apart.

Games and puzzles provide challenges and encourage problem solving. They can give children an opportunity to ask questions, understand rules set by others, and to share collaborative play with a larger group of children for longer periods.

Physical play gives children opportunities to develop body control and co-ordination of large movements, fine manipulative skills, spatial awareness and balance. Children need large and small equipment, indoors and outdoors, to be active and develop confidence in their movements.

Outdoor play in new mown grass, leaves, mud, water, snow or sand all contribute to a varied sensory experience. Play in outdoor spaces can encourage movement and mobility, and can enable more boisterous physical play.



“top tip”

Everyday items can extend a child's experience of the real world through play. Make a **Treasure Basket using a sturdy, shallow basket, containing a collection of everyday items. The items might include a bunch of keys, teddy bear, paper, ribbons, a whisk, a wooden eggcup or a lemon. These items will vary in weight, size, texture, colour, taste, temperature and sound. Objects should be washable, disposable or replaceable. Children will use all of their senses to discover what an object is, what it is like and what it can do.**

Further information

Get toy updates in Insight magazine. **Insight**, RNIB's magazine for parents and professionals, will have a regular section featuring new toys for blind and partially sighted children. Find out more from rnib.org.uk/insightmagazine

A clear print version of this leaflet is also available.

RNIB

supporting blind and partially sighted people