

## Inclusion tips : cerebral palsy

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a physical disability that affects movement and posture. Each child with CP will vary greatly in their ability and need for extra support. Some children may need equipment to support mobility (including walking frames, wheelchairs) or communication devices to facilitate communication.

### Where to start

- ❖ Become informed about cerebral palsy and the individual child's abilities, needs and interests
- ❖ Use first person language, eg child with a disability, not disabled child
- ❖ If you're not sure what someone can do, ask. Work collaboratively to find the most appropriate ways you can help children be included
- ❖ Focus on what the child can do and the ways in which the child's ability can be developed
- ❖ Model acceptance, a positive attitude will influence others
- ❖ Have expectations – by having expectations that a child will be able to achieve something, though it may take longer, you are setting the child up for success
- ❖ As with all children (and where appropriate) it is important to expect children with cerebral palsy to follow the rules and routines of the activity.
- ❖ Acknowledge achievements – let children know their efforts are valued
- ❖ Be creative and flexible – are there simple ways you can adapt or modify your activity to suit different abilities and give all children a chance to belong?



We recommend reading the *Shaping Outcomes Inclusion guide*, *Inclusion checklist* and the *disability factsheets*

### Top tips

Clarify with the family how the child communicates with others

Make an effort to communicate, and don't feel bad if you have difficulty understanding – it's okay to ask the child to repeat what they have said or to ask the carer to help you understand.

Children with CP generally need to put more effort into concentrating on their movements and sequences of actions – this means they may tire more easily.

Children with CP may also need extra time to complete activities or to move from one activity to another.

Think about physical access to facilities: do you have ramps, wide doorways, accessible bathrooms?

For more information about access go to:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/access-premises>

### Equipment

To a wheelchair user, the wheelchair is part of their personal space so don't move the chair without being asked, or touch or rest your foot on the chair. Make an effort to speak to a child at their level.

If you would like more information about community inclusion, we have developed a series of factsheets and checklists for families and community activities.

These can be found at: [www.directory.byronearlyintervention.org.au](http://www.directory.byronearlyintervention.org.au)

For further information about cerebral palsy:

<http://www.cerebralpalsy.org.au/>

[http://www.raisingchildren.net.au/special\\_needs/special\\_needs.html](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au/special_needs/special_needs.html)



# Shaping Outcomes

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