

## Let's go to the library!

Libraries offer a range of community activities and services for families. They can also be a place to meet new people and a source of information about other things going on in the community. If you have any concerns about going to the library, here are some ideas we hope will help.



### Before your library trip

If you are concerned about **physical access and amenities**, call beforehand and talk to the library about your access needs. You may also want to enquire about children's facilities and activities, and the busy / quiet times in the library.

**Talking with others** about your child's disability can sometimes be difficult - what you choose to share with others is entirely up to you. The information you do choose to share may help others develop good relationships with your child and to better understand how they can help your child join in certain activities.

You may choose to share the Shaping Outcomes *Inclusion guide, disability factsheets, participation checklist* and/or *inclusion tips* with library staff.

#### You can prepare your child by:

- ❖ Reading stories or watching videos about going to the library
- ❖ Practicing and playing games about going to the library
- ❖ Using visual supports to prepare your child for what will happen (eg photos of the library)- you can use these both before and during the visit
- ❖ Developing a social story for your child about going to the library

By understanding **what will happen** and **what is expected of them**, your child will feel less anxious or confused.

Be prepared with supports for your child's **sensory needs** – you may wish work with your early intervention specialist to develop a sensory profile for you child.

#### Plan for **challenging situations**:

- ❖ What are the signs your child is becoming upset?
- ❖ What can help prevent the situation from escalating?
- ❖ Is there somewhere quiet you can go to take a break?

Can you start with shorter visits to the library until your child is more comfortable? It is better to have small successes first. You may find it helpful to have a family member or friend come along to help.

### During the library trip

Use **visuals** to help your child understand what will be happening next. **Praise** your child, **encourage** positive behaviours and have a reward to motivate your child.

If your child does become distressed, **stay calm** yourself so you can help your child. If you can, leave before the situation becomes too overwhelming. It is best if you have small successes first.

**While being prepared will give you the best chance to succeed, things don't always go to plan.**

**Reflect on what worked and what didn't to help you plan for your next outing.**

**When possible, keep the outing short and build on your successes.**

For further information about local Libraries: [www.rtrl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rtrl.nsw.gov.au)

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

These can be found at:

<http://www.directory.byronearlyintervention.org.au/>



# Shaping Outcomes

early childhood intervention service

> because we can