

Safety in the community

Simple ideas for parents and
carers to use in the community



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Contents

- Introduction Page 3
- Danger awareness Page 3
- Road safety Page 4
- In-car safety Page 7
- Out and about in the community Page 8
- Contact information Page 9

Introduction

This booklet has been designed by the Occupational Therapy team to give you ideas and resources to help keep your child safe within the community. All references to child/children mean either a child or young person.

Danger Awareness

Danger awareness increases at around four to five years of age. Danger awareness does not develop suddenly but develops over time. This means if you are not exposed to danger a little bit, your danger awareness will be slower to set in.

Children with additional needs need additional support to learn about danger, road safe and staying safe in the community. This may be due to one or more of the following factors;

- Less aware of danger
- Easily distracted
- Find it hard to ignore background noise and activities
- Can be very impulsive
- Can be restless and impatient (for example, being unable to wait)
- Cognitive and/or learning challenges

Road Safety

Teaching children to understand road safety involves a number of skills. If we think about some of the steps involved in crossing the road these include:

- Finding a safe place to cross
- Understanding the importance of holding a parent or carers hand
- Stopping at the kerb
- Waiting at the kerb
- Looking left and right
- Listening
- Understanding when it is safe to cross
- Walking across road



It is easy to see why children with additional needs struggle to learn some or all of these steps. To support your child to develop skills there are several games or activities that you can play at home. For example:

- To help your child to understand “waiting”, try playing the traffic light game. Tell your child that you are going to shout out the colours of the traffic lights (you can

mix up the order that you shout out). When you shout out green they can run around the room or garden (if garden is safe and secure), when you shout amber they must jog on the spot (re-enforce waiting for the next colour) and when you shout red they must stop and stand still (re-enforce waiting for the next colour).

- Use of traffic play mats can help educate your child about different types of vehicles, different types of crossings (such as, zebra crossing or traffic lights), and safe places to cross etc.
- Road safety colouring sheets, chat with your child about road safety as they colour the picture (these can be found on a range of websites).
- Spot the hazard (these can be found on a range of websites).
- Role play
- Social stories (there are a range of social stories available on line and there are different apps that can help you teach your child about road safety. There are also a range of other social stories that may be helpful, such as running away).

The Occupational Therapy team are not specialists in road safety. It is useful to consider other agencies who are more experienced in this area. Listed below are some useful websites, videos, online games and apps which can help teach your child road safety:



Road safety websites:

- www.roadsafety.scot (includes activities, games, stories and videos)
- www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/road-safety/children
- www.autism.org.uk

Road safety videos:

There are a number of road safety videos for children available online (search “road safety for children”).

Road safety on-line games:

- Safe Cross Code Game:
<http://www.rsa.ie/RSA/Road-Safety/Campaigns/Current-road-safety-campaigns/Safe-Cross-Code/>

Road safety apps:

- Walk-Wise Kids (Road Safety for Pre-School Children)
- Learn about traffic
- Road Safety Pairs
- In-car safety

In-car safety

Many parents or carers regularly contact the Occupational Therapy team for advice and information about car seating. This is not an area that the Occupational Therapy team can give advice on. It is recommended that parents or carers contact specialist services who can give the necessary information.

Listed below are some examples of services that can be contacted:

- http://www.windmillspecialneeds.co.uk/html/car_seats.html
- <https://incarsafetycentre.co.uk/carseats-accessories/>

In-car safety social stories:

To help your child understand about safety within the car it may be helpful to read them a social story. There are a number of websites online where you can access safety within the car social stories. There are also many websites that will help you create your own social story (search “car safety social stories for children”).

In-car safety videos:

There are a number of in-car safety videos for children available online (search “in-car safety for children”).

Out and About in the Community

It can be challenging keeping your child safe when out and about in the local community. It is important to try to help your child learn about danger awareness. For some children this can be very difficult. Listed below are some useful products that may be helpful to ensure your child’s safety when out and about.

- Back-pack with harness and reigns
- Children’s security wrist bands
- Children’s GPS tracker watch/necklace/key-ring
- Children’s GPS tracker for shoes/shoelaces
- Child ID temporary safety tattoo

Contact Information

East Ayrshire

Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy Services (East)

Level 2

The Johnnie Walker Bond Building

15 Strand Street

Kilmarnock

KA1 1HU

Telephone: 01563 553611

North Ayrshire

Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy Services (North)

Rainbow House

Ayrshire Central Hospital

Kilwinning Road

Irvine KA12 8SS

01294 323070

South Ayrshire

Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy Services (South)

Arrol Park Resource Centre

Doonfoot Road

Ayr KA7 4DW

01292 614988

All new requests for assistance for Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy services should be forwarded to:

The Rainbow House Mailbox:

aa-uhb.clinical-rainbowhouse@aapct.scot.nhs.uk

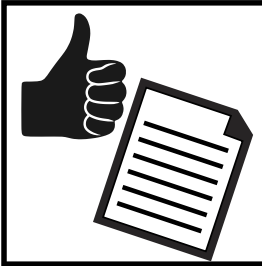
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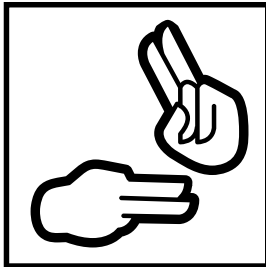
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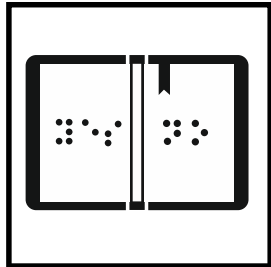
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