

# factsheet

## special needs

When deciding what is safe for a child with special needs the main consideration is the same as with any other child – knowing the child and knowing his or her abilities and behaviour.

Safety guidance is often written in a very general way and may describe ages at which it is safe for children to undertake certain activities. This always has to be approximate as children vary hugely even within the same family. It is often more helpful to talk about developmental stages.

Children with physical disabilities may take longer to reach certain milestones such as crawling or walking. Their understanding of what is safe and their ability to judge risk is however likely to be the same as other children of the same age.

Children with learning disabilities on the other hand may have difficulty learning about risk or understanding their environment. This can make it difficult to teach them about safety.

It is difficult to generalise about any children. The people who know them best – usually their parents or main carers - are most able to help them develop safe behaviour.

Children with special needs may need specialist equipment, depending on their disability or the type of home they live in. Other parents or support groups may be able to give advice on what they have used and found to be helpful.

You may be able to buy or hire equipment such as extended stair gates or soft play areas locally. The contacts below may also be able to advise:

Contact a Family  
209-211 City Road  
London  
EC1V 1JN  
tel 020 7608 8700  
web [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

Council for Disabled Children  
8 Wakely Street  
London  
EC1V 7QE  
tel 020 7843 6061  
web [www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/](http://www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/)



In Car Safety Centre (advice on child car seats for special needs)  
Unit 5  
The Auto Centre  
Stacey Bushes  
Milton Keynes MK12 6HS  
tel 01908 220909

Mencap  
123 Golden Lane  
London  
EC1Y 0RT  
tel 020 7454 0454  
web [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

National Autistic Society  
393 City Road  
London  
EC1V 1NG  
tel 020 7833 2299  
web [www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

National Deaf Children's Society  
15 Dufferin Street  
London  
EC1Y 8UR  
tel 020 7490 8656 (voice/minicom)  
[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)

Royal National Institute for the Blind  
224 Great Portland Street  
London  
W1N 6AA  
tel 020 7388 1266  
[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Whizz-kidz, the Movement for Non-Mobile Children  
1 Warwick Row  
London  
SW1E 5ER  
tel 020 7233 6600  
web [www.whizz-kidz.org.uk](http://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk)

For information on other child safety topics see **capt's** website at [www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk) or write to us at the address below.

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**CHILD ACCIDENT PREVENTION TRUST** 22-26 FARRINGDON LANE LONDON EC1R 3AJ  
t 020 7608 3828 f 020 7608 3674 e [safe@capt.org.uk](mailto:safe@capt.org.uk) [www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)

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