

Building on strengths

For many children/young people with disabilities there is a focus on what the child CANNOT do. Large files keep track of the child's challenges but often do not include Children/young people's abilities. Knowing what the child can do is essential to effective planning. A focus on strengths and skills is more likely to encourage self-respect and motivation, as they child sees success rather than failure.

Supporting Independent Learning

Every time an adult 'does for' a child they are sending a clear message. The child learns 'I am not capable' and/or 'an adult will always be there to rescue me'

Principles: The aim is to encourage the concept that the child is 'in charge' of their bodies, their learning and their behaviour.

Respect interpersonal space & intimate boundaries

Approach child with eye contact and wait for invitation

Talk through what you will be doing with child so that they are not taken by surprise

Confidentiality & privacy

Actively involve child in their learning

Plan their program with them when and where appropriate

Negotiate when where and how you will work with child

Instigate ways of initiating when help is required

Break child's tasks into smaller units and decide who will do what

Organise other supports and resources with child

Prepare a help-list that reminds children of how to get effective help

The 'Help List'- sample

I check what I can do first

I organise the equipment that I need

I work on my own on those things I can do

I ask for help by putting my card out/name on the board/ signal

I decide who would be the best person to help me with this, the teacher, my aide, 'experts' in my group, where we can help each other