



Specialist equipment and safety adaptations

This information sheet may be useful for families who are:

- Looking for safety adaptation ideas.
- In need of some suppliers contact details.



Introduction

This sheet contains information about specialist equipment for children and adults with severe learning disabilities who display behaviour that challenges. It also lists some information that can help to improve safety and protect a person's home. It is by no means exhaustive. Suppliers' contact details are listed at the end. Inclusion in this list does not constitute an endorsement from the CBF. Readers are encouraged to evaluate the benefits and risks of each product before purchase.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology is any item, product or piece of equipment that helps an individual to do something which they may find difficult. Assistive Technology items may include wheelchairs, walkers, and Personal Emergency Response Systems. Personal Emergency Response Systems use electronic sensors connected to an alarm system to notify carers of a change in the environment. Pressure or infrared sensors are available to detect someone entering or leaving their room or bed. Alarms or alerts can sense when someone has an epileptic seizure in bed or has wet the bed (an 'enuresis' sensor).

These types of technology can save regular checking times and allow the child or adult more independence and privacy. There are also automatic lights that sense when someone enters or leaves a room.



All our information sheets are available to download free of charge because we believe that money should not be a barrier to getting the information you need when you need it.

Please see the end of this information sheet for details of how to support us.

We want to make sure our resources are helpful. Please spend a few minutes giving us some feedback: [Feedback form](#)

A number of companies make these types of technology; a list of products with advice and ratings can be accessed from [Living Made Easy](#). This website is produced by the charity [Disabled Living Foundation](#), which gives information and advice on choosing the right product. [Hft](#) also has a list of assistive technology products and a virtual house which shows various forms of assistive technology and how they can be adapted into the home.

Bathroom



If shower, towel rails or toilet roll holders are pulled down, magnetic versions (that pull apart from the brackets under pressure and can be re-attached) are available from [Primera](#). Various devices can be fitted to prevent baths or basins overflowing; [Nova-Flo](#) is a product that senses the water level in a bath or basin and turns off the taps automatically to prevent flooding. [Magiplug](#) is a bath plug with a built-in sensor that detects the pressure from the water and opens the plug to let out water when the level is too high. Tap straps are available from [Fledglings](#), which help to prevent taps being turned on. Tap straps can be used on both bath and sink taps, although they are only suitable for cross-head type taps.

Beds/Bedding and Mattresses

Tough, robust mattresses and beds are available from [Tough Furniture](#) and [Link Design](#) (but are expensive!). These can be fixed to the floor if required. Bedding should be made from cotton, to withstand high temperature washes. One parent contacted the local hospital to purchase a plastic covered mattress after her daughter constantly ripped mattress covers and waterproof sheeting, and this was easier to clean. [Tough Furniture](#) can supply secure mattresses which are tear and water resistant. Waterproof, wipe clean pillows and duvets are available to purchase from [Fledglings](#). A waterproof mattress protector is also available from [Brolly Sheets](#) and comes in 5 bright colours. The protectors are 100% cotton and are designed to fit over the bottom sheet making it easier to change without having to pull all the bedding off. Another parent used [Fast Asleep](#) blankets and bedding as they have found them to be 'bite proof'.



Clothing

Clothes may need to be altered to suit someone's likes and dislikes of fabrics or behaviours and abilities of dressing/undressing. [Clothing Solutions](#) is a registered

charity that provides information and advice about how to meet the clothing needs of people with disabilities. In addition, they will adapt clothes or tailor from scratch to suit specific needs, such as using preferred fabrics or making nightwear 'all-in-one'. [Adaptawear](#) also offers a wide selection of adult clothing to purchase that makes getting dressed easier and less painful. [KC Sleepsuits](#) are specialist suppliers of sleepsuits.

Curtains

If curtains or curtain rails are regularly pulled down, Velcro tab top curtains are available to purchase from [Colourways](#) (specialised furniture page), which can be easily rehung without any damage. Magnetic curtain rails that pull apart under pressure and can be re-attached are available from [Primera](#).



Doors

Doors and doorframes may be damaged. Internal doors can be replaced by sturdier fireproof doors and can be fixed to the frames with heavy duty hinges. More hinges than the conventional two can help, but such strengthening may result in problems with the door frames coming away from the walls. Consult a carpenter about the best course of action to take for your individual needs. The use of window locks or star locks for the top of doors can prevent access to particular rooms (for example, the kitchen during a behaviour incident). Magnetic locks can also be fitted from [Fledglings](#). A door viewer hole in the bedroom door enables you to check on the person without disturbing him/her (check that the viewer has 180° viewing range and ensure privacy is carefully considered). These are available at most DIY stores and online at [Discount Locks](#). [Fledglings](#) manufacture sliding door and window blocks that are easy to fit and limit how far a door or window will open.

Electrical Equipment

Electrical sockets should, if possible, be located outside the bedroom (or inside locked cupboards) enabling the use of stereos, televisions, etc (placed in a cupboard with a polycarbonate window). Light switches can be located outside the room, and lights should be dome type, not pendant. Stainless steel electrical sockets with lockable fronts (screw down flap) are available from most good electrical suppliers and plastic socket covers lockable with a key are available from [Fledglings](#).

Flooring

Vinyl flooring is easiest to keep clean. It should be securely fixed to the floor. Bolt safe flooring (2.5mm) is available from any carpet stockist. Durable washable carpet is a more expensive alternative that is available from [Gradus](#). [Soft Floor](#) produces a range of interlocking soft mats and rubber floorings which have interlocking jigsaw edges to create a multi-purpose soft floor area for play rooms, garages etc.

Furniture



A range of companies supply waterproof chairs with removable covers. [Colourways](#) supply waterproof wipe clean fabrics for fixed upholstery as well as loose covers for chairs and sofas which are machine washable. [Pineapple](#) create a wide range of **mindfully designed, safe and robust furniture. If they don't have something suitable, they create it!**

[Tough Furniture](#) supply wardrobes, cupboards and furniture which can be fixed to walls. They have lockable drawers, (to prevent them from being removed to climb on or to take out the contents) and television cabinets with a strong, lockable screen. [Anti-Ligature Shop](#) is a supplier of specialist anti-ligature products ranging from anti-ligature door and window furniture, to lighting, and plumbing etc. [Poppi furniture](#) sells a selection of furniture called the 'challenging' range, offering adapted products including fully welded and damage resistant mattresses and heavy-duty dining tables, and also can adapt furniture to requests.

Information Technology

There are a number of companies specialising in software and hardware that can provide useful teaching tools and aids for language development. [Incentive Plus](#) supplies a range of computer educational resources, communication software, toys, and equipment. [Inclusive Technology](#) provides special educational needs software, switches, simple communication aids and assistive technology for individuals with a learning disability, sensory impairment or physical disability. [Keytools](#) are a supplier of assistive technology and ergonomic computer equipment; they offer a large range of adapted keyboards, support software, mouse and user-friendly furniture.

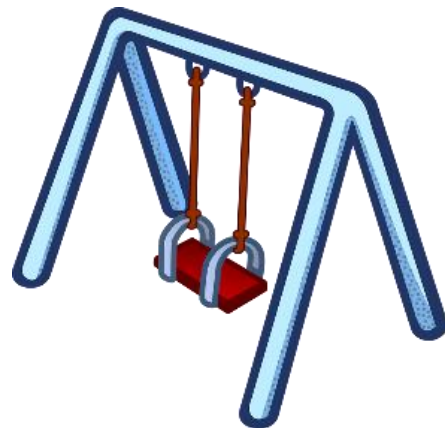


[Widgit](#) supplies picture and symbol software for literacy development, labelling and communication (including tailor made resources). [Ace Centre](#) have a resource bank of communication aids and access devices, as well as resources available for short term loan at a small cost. [Ability World](#) have a variety of products to assist with learning and communication such as fabric communication boards, switch accessible cameras, Megabee (portable, simple to use, eye-blink communication board) and a voice pen which speaks words, phrases or plays music when you touch the paper.

Most smartphones will have a variety of apps designed for children and adults with learning disabilities. The [Apple Store](#) has various apps for iPads and iPhones which allow the user to play musical notes by tapping on the screen, as well apps for writing and drawing. Some of the apps are free to download. The store can be accessed through the device that will be used. The app store for Android and Google devices ([Google Play](#)) also offers a range of useful apps – one example is JABtalk, which is designed to help people with little to no speech communicate by allowing them to build sentences from words and pictures.

Outdoor equipment/leisure

Family carers have found that swings can be a great way to have fun and get some exercise outdoors and are available for children and adults. [Brave Toys](#) sell swings made with steel and rope that are 'strong enough for adults', but note that regulations only cover the swing for people up to 14 years old.



Tricycles can be a fun and healthy activity for children or adults who are not able to ride a bicycle. [TomCat](#) is a company that produce specially adapted trikes and chairs for children and adults. A range of tricycles including folding and electric trikes is offered by [Tricyclesales](#). [Di Blasi](#) also offers adapted, foldable trikes as well as other mobility aids – however this company is based in Italy so shipping costs apply!

Radiators

Radiators can be boxed in to eliminate the danger of burns and also to limit the amount of noise that can be generated by hitting them. There are also radiators that are not hot to touch (Low Surface Temperature Radiators) and underfloor heating for rooms if you need to avoid having them. Radiators can also be placed high up on walls, out of reach. An alternative heating system to radiators is skirting board heating, called Thermaskirt and provided by [Discrete Heat](#).

Toys and Sensory Equipment

[SensoryPlus](#), [Sensory Toy Warehouse](#), [SpaceKraft](#), [Rompa](#) and [Sensory Toy Warehouse](#) provide various toys and other equipment relating to sensory environments, including calming objects and fidget toys. [Rompa](#) offer soft chairs and soft play items, such as wedges and tactile tunnels.

Balance and movement equipment may help children who need extra input to sense where their body is and to improve their balance (available from [Rompa](#), [Sensory Plus](#), [Sensory Toy Warehouse](#), [SpaceKraft](#)).

[Cheap Disability Aids](#) produce various sensory products such as a UV bubble mixture which lights up in the dark, children's ear defenders for those that are sensitive to loud noises and a magnetic time tracker which can be set to alert children or adults that an activity is coming to an end by lights or noise. They also produce a range of bracelets, necklaces and bangles for children who chew to enable them to continue to do this in a discreet way.



Learning games and books are available from [Incentive Plus](#), such as 'Off we go!', 'Going to buy clothes' or 'Going to the dentist' books. Age appropriate sensory equipment and resources are also available in the Adults and Elderly section of the [Sensory Toy Warehouse](#) website as well as on the [TFH](#) website.

[Safe Spaces](#) can custom make a padded safe play space, sleep room or calm area to support children and adults who display challenging behaviour or have poor sleep patterns. These safe spaces can be customised to include sensory stimulation such as fibre optic kits or a special effects projector and can also provide a safe, private space for the user.

Travel safety

To keep individuals safe when travelling by car, a large bucket type seat with a 5 point harness is available from [Crelling Harnesses Ltd](#). [In Car Safety Centre](#) can supply car seats fitted with impact pads as an alternative to a 5 point harness. [Windmill Special Needs Co. Ltd](#) are suppliers of magnetic harnesses and seat belt guards, ("Buckle Guard" and "Angel Guard") designed to fit over different seat belt mechanisms, making it difficult for the individual to undo the seat belt. If necessary, a 5 point harness and a foot rest can be fitted for those who need help sitting up-straight or drag their feet.

A transparent screen can be fitted behind the front seats for travelling with people who display severe challenging behaviour in the car. This allows enhanced safety for everyone in the car and peace of mind for the driver.

[Driver Shields UK Ltd](#) is a supplier of these screens.



Wall coverings

Painted walls are easy to clean and eliminate the potential for unplanned wallpaper stripping and/or shredding and eating. Washable paints are preferable and a number of special effect paints are widely available with a protective washable finish. Posters, pictures and photos can be covered by a protective sheet of polycarbonate which will not crack or shatter. Protective wall features are available from [Gradus](#).

Windows

Ordinary glass can be replaced with strengthened safety glass or Makrolon (polycarbonate). Made to measure Makrolon sheets and acrylic windows are available from [Eagle Boat Windows](#). Lockable windows are advisable for children and adults who have no sense of danger (window locks can be easily fitted to most windows and are available at most DIY centres). Polycarbonate window protection frames made from solid ash timber are available from [Tough Furniture Ltd](#). These frames contain a lockable door which gives access to curtains and blinds whilst still providing ventilation (see page 35 of the online brochure on their website).



Wooden surfaces

Some people may chew and bite wooden surfaces such as window sills and furniture. A 90° strong plastic edging strip (available from most DIY stores) can be fitted to wooden edges.

Need an aid or piece of equipment which is not available commercially?

Several organisations manufacture tailor made equipment for disabled people:

- [Designability](#) are a non-profit making charity that design and manufacture innovative items to support disabled people in their daily activities and to enable their needs to be met.
- [Cerebra Innovation Centre](#) produces bespoke equipment and adapts existing products to support children with brain conditions.
- [DEMAND](#) is a national charity dedicated to making new products to suit individuals' needs. They also refurbish old equipment and have a second-hand section on their website.
- [Medical Engineering Resource Unit \(MERU\)](#) is a charity that can make modifications to existing disability products as well as custom-designing and manufacturing new and complex items.
- [REMAP](#) is a national charity that makes or modifies equipment to suit an individual's needs when nothing is suitable through mainstream sources.

Still can't find what you need?

[Fledglings](#) are a charity that aims to help parents find the equipment they need for their disabled child.

Need help funding equipment?

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are given by local councils to make adaptations in the home or provide equipment that will make the disabled person more independent, safe in the home or make caring for them easier (Home Improvement Grants are available in Scotland). An Occupational Therapist should visit the person at home to assess what equipment is appropriate for them. You must apply for a DFG before buying any equipment or starting improvement works – the DFG cannot be given afterwards to refund you. DFGs are not means tested when they are for a disabled child up to 19 years old. For adults over 19 years a financial assessment will be carried out to see if the disabled person will be required to pay a contribution towards the cost of the adaptations. People who receive certain benefits will not have to make a contribution.

When buying equipment and safety adaptations for a disabled child or adult, the purchase is exempt from VAT. Most suppliers should have a VAT exemption form; however, a template is available from the HMRC website (www.hmrc.gov.uk).



If the item needed cannot be funded by a DFG, then you may be able to get some help towards it from a charity or trust fund or make use of a loan scheme. A number of charities that give grants, such as the [Family Fund](#), are listed at the back of this information sheet. Wider lists are available from [Contact](#) and [Disabled Living Foundation \(Living Made Easy- Children section\)](#). For help finding a grant [Turn 2 Us](#) have a database of trusts and funds, such as trusts related to the profession of a parent or the religion of the families.

A loan scheme for equipment and communication aids is available from [Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children](#), which can provide grants for essential equipment and communication aids. They also offer a priority loan service for terminally ill children and access to a Newlife Nurse Helpline via telephone or using the online chat system.

Funding for mobility equipment which is not usually available on the NHS including specialist trikes and car seats is available from [My AFK](#), for disabled children and young people up to the age of 26.

Last reviewed: December 2022

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation

We are the charity for people with severe learning disabilities who display challenging behaviour. We make a difference to the lives of children and adults across the UK by:

- Providing information about challenging behaviour
- Organising peer support for family carers and professionals
- Giving information and support by phone or email
- Running workshops which reduce challenging behaviour

To access our information and support, call 01634 838739, email info@theCBF.org.uk, or visit our website: www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk

If you have found this information useful, please consider making a donation. You can show your support at www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/support-us. Make a £5 donation by texting CBF DN05 to 70085 Or email us to get involved at support_us@theCBF.org.uk

Suppliers: A-D

Ability World

Tel: 0345 47 47 245
Email: enquiries@ability-world.com
Website: www.ability-world.com

Ace Centre

Tel : 0800 080 3115
Email : enquiries@ace-centre.org.uk
Website: www.acecentre.org.uk

Adaptawear

Tel: 0800 051 1931
Email: info@adaptawear.co.uk
Website: www.adaptawear.com

Anti-Ligature Shop

Tel: 0330 0536 020
Email: info@anti-ligature-shop.co.uk
Website: www.anti-ligature-shop.co.uk/

Apple Store

Tel. Accessibility and Assistive Technology Line:0800 048 07
Website: www.apple.com/uk/accessibility

Brave Toys

Email: swings@bravetoys.com
Website: www.bravetoys.com

Cerebra Innovation Centre

Tel: 0800 328 1159
Email: enquiries@cerebra.org.uk
Website: www.cerebra.org.uk/CIC

Cheap Disability Aids

Email: Contact via website
Website:
www.cheapdisabilityaids.co.uk

Chewigem

WhatsApp: 07813590339
Email: hello@chewigem.co.uk
Website: www.chewigem.co.uk

Clothing Solutions

Tel: 01274 292291
Email: Contact via website
Website: www.clothingsolutions.org.uk

Colourways Ltd

Tel: 01489 580978
Email: Contact via website
Website: www.colourwaysltd.com

Crelling Harnesses Ltd

Tel: 01253 852298
Email: info@crelling.com
Website: www.crelling.com

Demand

Tel: 01923 681800
Email: Contact on website
Website: www.demand.org.uk

Designability

Tel: 01225 824 4103
Email: info@designability.org.uk
Website: www.designability.org.uk

Di Blasi

Tel: 39 095 940384 (international charges may apply)
Email: info@dibiasi.it
Website: <https://www.di-biasi.com/?lang=en>

Disabled Living Foundation

Helpline: 0300 999 004
Email: info@dlf.org.uk
Website: www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Discrete Heat

Tel: 01942 88 00 66
Email: info@discreteheat.co.uk
Website: www.discreteheat.com

Driver Shields UK Ltd

Tel: 01702 479872
Email: info@drivershields.co.uk
Website: www.drivershields.co.uk

Suppliers E-Q

Eagle Boat Windows

Tel: 01273 890300

Email: sales@eagleboatwindows.co.uk

Website: www.eagleboatwindows.co.uk

Fastasleep

Tel: 028 9442 8686

Email: sales@fastasleep.co.uk

Website: www.fastasleep.co.uk

Fledglings

Tel: 0203 319 9772

Email: fledglings@contact.org.uk

Website: www.fledglings.org.uk

Gradus

Tel: 01625 428922

E-mail: Contact on website

Website: www.gradus.com

Google Play Store

Website: <https://play.google.com>

Hft

Tel: 0117 906 1700

Email: Contact via website

Website: www.hft.org.uk

Virtual house:

www.hftsmarthouse.org.uk

In Car Safety

Tel: Milton Keynes: 01908 220909

Belfast: 028 9074 2052

Essex: 01702 808 313

Email: info@incarsafetycentre.co.uk

Website: www.incarsafetycentre.co.uk

Incentive Plus

Tel: 01604 870828

Email: orders@incentiveplus.co.uk

Website: www.incentiveplus.co.uk

KC Sleepsuits

Email: Contact via website

Website: www.kcsleepsuits.co.uk

Keytools

Email: info@hypertec.co.uk

Website: www.keytools.co.uk

Living made easy

Tel: 0300 999 0004

Email: info@dfi.org.uk

Website: www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Magiplug

Tel: 01322 613154

Email: Contact on website

Website: www.magiplug.com

MERU

Email: Contact on website

Website: www.meru.org.uk

Nova-Flo

Tel: 01608 811707

Email: Contact on website

Website: www.nova-flo.com

Pineapple

Tel: 01622 237 830

Email: sales@pineapplecontracts.com

Website: www.uk.pineapplecontracts.com

Poppi Furniture

Tel: 01226 722139

Email: sales@poppifurniture.co.uk

Website: www.poppifurniture.co.uk

Primera

Tel: 0330 058 0988

Email: info@safehingeprimera.co.uk

Website: www.primeralife.co.uk

QED – Quality Enabling Devices/ Inclusive Technology

Tel: 01457 819790

Email: inclusive@inclusive.co.uk

Website: www.inclusive.co.uk

Suppliers R-W

Remap

Tel: 01732 760209
Email: data@remap.org.uk
Website: www.remap.org.uk

Rompa

Tel: 01246 211 777
Email: customer.service@rompa.com
Website: www.rompa.com

Safe Spaces

Tel: 01706 816 274
Email: info@safespaces.co.uk
Website: www.safespaces.co.uk

Sensory Direct

Tel: 01905 670500
Email: support@sensorydirect.com
Website: www.sensorydirect.com

SensoryPlus

Tel: 01302 645 685
Email: info@sensoryplus.co.uk
Website: www.sensoryplus.co.uk

Sensory Toy Warehouse

Tel: 01915 460 191
Email: Contact on website
Website: www.sensorytoywarehouse.com

Softfloor / Softfloor Kids

Tel: 01206 390570
Email: Contact via form on website
Website: www.softfloor.co.uk www.softfloorkids.co.uk

Squease

Tel: 0203 398 1564
Email: info@squeasewear.com
Website: www.squeasewear.com

SpaceKraft Ltd

Tel: 01274 581 007
Email: enquiries@spacekraft.co.uk
Website: www.spacekraft.co.uk

TFH Special Needs Toys

Tel: 01299 827820
Email: info@tfhuk.com
Website: www.specialneedstoys.com

TomCat

Tel: 01452 616900
Email: info@tomcatuk.org
Website: www.tomcatspecialneeds.co.uk

Tough Furniture Ltd

Tel: 01588 674340
Email: sales@toughfurniture.com
Website: www.toughfurniture.com

E-Bikes Direct

Tel: 01580 830959
Email: sales@e-bikesdirect.co.uk
Website: www.tricyclesales.co.uk

Widgit

Tel: 01926 333680
Email: info@widgit.com
Website: www.widgit.com

Windmill Special Needs Co. Ltd

Tel: 01457 820684
Text: 07752 563755
Email: sales@windmillspecialneeds.co.uk
Website: www.windmillspecialneeds.co.uk

Grant giving charities

The Edward Gostling Foundation

Grants for building work, equipment and respite breaks

Tel: 01753 753900

Email: Contact on website

Website: www.edwardgostlingfoundation.org.uk

Caudwell Children

Grants for equipment, communication aids, or therapy

Tel: 0345 300 1348

Email: charity@caudwellchildren.com

Website: www.caudwellchildren.com

Cerebra

Grants for equipment and therapies

Tel: 0800 328 1159

Email: info@cerebra.org.uk

Website: www.cerebra.org.uk

Children Today Charitable Trust

Grants for mobility aids, communication aids and sensory equipment

Tel: 01244 335622

Email: info@childrentoday.org.uk

Website: www.childrentoday.org.uk

Family Fund

Charity that provide grants for low income families raising severely disabled children

Tel: 01904 550055

Email: info@familyfund.org.uk

Website: www.familyfund.org.uk

Florence Nightingale Aid in Sickness Trust

Grants for children and adults who are ill or disabled

Tel: 0207 998 8817

Email: lisa.hungerford@fnaist.org.uk

Website: www.fnaist.org.uk

Independence at Home

Grants for mobility and disability equipment and home adaptations (Adults and children)

Tel: 020 8427 7929

Email: iah@independenceathome.org.uk

Website: www.independenceathome.org.uk

Lifeline 4 Kids

Provide essential equipment for disabled children under 18, families and schools/respite

Email: Contact via website

Website: www.lifeline4kids.org

My AFK

Fund mobility aids up to age 25

Tel: 020 8347 8111

Email: info@my-afk.org

www.my-afk.org/how-we-help/mobility-equipment/

Newlife (BDF) Child and Family Fund

For children under 18 with birth defects or congenital conditions

Tel: 01543 462 777

Email: Contact via website

Website: www.newlifecharity.co.uk

Whizz-Kidz

Funding for mobility equipment

Tel: 020 7233 6600

Email: info@whizz-kidz.org.uk

Website: www.whizz-kidz.org.uk

Help finding funding

Contact

Tel: 0808 808 3555

Email: info@contact.org.uk

Website: www.contact.org.uk

Turn 2 Us

Tel: 0808 802 2000

Email: Contact via website

Website: www.turn2us.org.uk/Find-Benefits-Grants

Further Reading

Disabled Living Foundation

Living made easy for children

Website:

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/scenario.php?csid=172

Disability Grants

Website: www.disability-grants.org/grants-uk.html

Learning Disability England

Factsheet: Adapting a property

Website:

www.housingandsupport.org.uk/adapting-a-property