

## **Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs**

### **ISCAN**

## **HOME SAFETY ADVICE FOR CHILDREN**

It is recognised that many children and young people with disabilities also have challenging behaviour and they require a level of support and supervision beyond that which would be normally expected for a child of their age. However, often simple solutions can improve the difficulties experienced.

The ISCAN will consider providing specialist safety adaptations/equipment when a child's vulnerability is not due to developmental norms related to their age. It is expected that families have tried techniques and commercially available equipment/gadgets themselves first. Whilst we realise there are cost implications it is possible to consider using DLA funding to assist with small items. This leaflet aims to offer advice, give examples and signpost. Unfortunately there are waiting times for our intervention and sometimes simple solutions can assist more quickly than we are able to respond.

### **Family Responsibility**

A safe home environment is a priority for all parents/carers.

Health Visitors are available to all families for general advice regarding safety; other useful sources include Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) and the Fire Service.

### **House**

There are pieces of equipment that families feel are essential for general safety.

Many high street stores have leaflets of their own that can provide a range of suggestions and ideas including

- safety catches for cupboards, washing machines, fridges,
- safety gates (standard and extra tall heights)
- plug socket/light switch covers etc.
- window opening restrictors
- safety film for glass

Some of these products are only suitable for younger children.

### Garden

A safe play area is beneficial to all young peoples growing development.

Good supervision is recommended at all times,

Consider potential hazards such as

- Blind spots to supervision
- Dangerous objects such as garden tools
- Greenhouse glass
- Areas/Objects that can be climbed – sheds, wall, lattice fencing, wheelie bins
- Gaps in hedging or fencing

The design of the garden, choice of toys and/or play equipment all contribute to the child's experience and to whether the garden provides an area to let off steam or to calm down.

### **ISCAN Support/Advice/Intervention**

Whilst it is acknowledged that all children, family dynamics and home environments are different and each may require an individual assessment, some of the following have provided practical solutions that have worked for others:

#### Safety from lack of awareness of the dangers of outdoors

For families of young people who consistently leave the family home via windows and doors and are unaware of the dangers of outdoors e.g. roads, falling, entrapment, strangers etc

- Door or Window Safety locks
- Keyless locks
- Window shutters
- Window opening restrictors
- Monitoring systems / Alarms

#### Safety from Flooding

Water stop switches and other devices that can stop water flow from taps may provide a solution for children who have an obsession with water but need access to the toilet

### Kitchen

Gas/electric cookers, fridges, knives, cleaning/hazardous products are all potential hazards in the kitchen. Close supervision at all times may be necessary, preventing unsupervised access, or a specific area of concern may be addressed individually i.e.,

- An isolation switch for a gas cooker,
- A locked cupboard for keeping hazardous items.
- Reducing/preventing access to the kitchen completely by use of Safety Gates. For older children who can easily climb standard child safety gates taller gates are available which fit in the same way (google taller safety gates as oppose to child safety gates)
- Barn style / stable gate doors can be beneficial.

### Safe Sleep

Providing a safe environment for a child with a poor sleep pattern may involve considering all the aforementioned areas of home safety and more besides.

- A calming environment without distractions may have a positive effect, removing stimulating toys, games etc
- Choice of furniture, bed and mattress are to be considered
- Specialist sleeping suits are available to help children who smear
- Fixing furniture to wall/floor
- Reducing opportunity to climb
- Covering radiators
- Fitting window locks
- Putting a mattress on the floor may be necessary.
- Tent style beds create a quieter, less stimulating environment
- Black out blinds

### Reduced Access to rooms, stairs, cupboards and contents

- Key less locks (keypad locks),
- Appropriate locks,
- Additional lever handles fixed to the top of the door may provide a solution to a parents or siblings bedroom and contents being damaged and may provide a safe storage area for household items e.g. computer, electrical goods etc.
- Safety gates above the standard high street specification have been supplied and fitted where appropriate.

### Glass

Where a child is a danger to him/herself and others due to regular breaking of ordinary window/door glass or where there is a strong possibility of doing so. Reinforced glass or safety film that will reduce the risk of breakage and shattering may be appropriate.

A full and thorough risk assessment is undertaken as part of the process. ISCAN liaise closely to identify the most appropriate and safe solution for the young person and their family and carers.

The Following Websites may be of Assistance

[www.fledgings.org.uk](http://www.fledgings.org.uk)

[www.netmums.com](http://www.netmums.com)

[www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/child-safety](http://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/child-safety)

[www.safetots.co.uk](http://www.safetots.co.uk)

[www.childsafety.co.uk](http://www.childsafety.co.uk)

Big retails stores sell many child safety objects

For more information or to make a referral

Contact: Rowan House 0161 366 2050