

Primary Top Tips

Dear Parent / Carers,

We hope that you are keeping well and safe. The Habilitation Specialists have created a Top Tips handout to support parents and pupils across Swansea during these unprecedented times. Please find below useful strategies, links, activities and resources to support your child's development.

We hope you stay safe and well!

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Habilitation Specialists

Strategies for promoting Habilitation Skills at Home

- Encourage your child to undertake dressing skills at home. Practising different types of clothes fastenings – buttons, zips, poppers, laces etc.
- Get your child to help with daily tasks at home – washing the dishes, basic food preparation, setting the table.
- Explore different textures and materials in the garden – rough/smooth, soft/hard; wood, metal, brick etc.
- Develop auditory discrimination skills when outside – birds singing, lawn mower, dog barking etc.
- Develop routines to promote their own personal hygiene skills – washing, brushing teeth etc.
- Money Skills – engage in role play activities – shopping/ paying for items using real money. Use menus to work out the total value of the bill.
- Gross motor skills – jumping, hopping, skipping etc.

Establishing a Routine

Many children feel more secure if there is a predictable routine each day. While this doesn't need to be as rigid as a typical classroom schedule, it may follow a predictable sequence. For example, alternate structured tasks where your child is expected to sit still and do independent work with movement and more active times. Encourage them to be active participants in daily household tasks and activities, and be sure to have quiet, meaningful time to talk and read together. Many younger children and those with multiple disabilities may benefit from a tactile calendar, using real objects or concrete symbols to let them know what will happen next.

Helping Around the House

Having everyone at home is a great time to work on providing practice with routine daily tasks, such as preparing meals, cleaning up, putting away the dishes, setting the table, and doing the laundry. While children will be at different levels in what they are able to do, this is a time to practice counting (how many forks do we need to set the table?), matching (think laundry or putting away the dishes), positional concepts, such as left/right, top/bottom (shelves, drawers, place settings).

Cooking

Meal preparation has to happen every day anyway, so this can be a great way to reinforce skills. Cooking has built-in motivation for many people, and whether you're preparing special snacks or basic family meals, there is a way to embed skills along the way. Young children or those with multiple disabilities can practice functional skills, such as identifying food items and equipment, counting, measuring, stirring, and scooping. Older children can research recipes, practice fractions, calculate amounts (calories, portions, etc.), and learn about nutrition and budgeting.

Ideas for Young Children

There are lots of opportunities for young children to learn new skills every day! Help them to build basic concepts, such as wet/dry, big/little, rough/smooth, heavy/light. Practice counting -- steps, chairs, spoons, blocks. Give them a chance to explore items that have interesting textures and engaging features, comparing things. Encourage the use of all different types of hand skills to build hand and finger strength, as well as coordination.

Arts and Crafts

Arts and crafts activities can promote tactile exploration and fine motor skills. It's not important to have a perfect product at the end, but rather the focus should be on the process of exploring different types of tactile materials. There are many materials that are fun just by themselves, such as playdoh, clay or Wikki-stix. Texture can be added to fingerpaint (sand, for example) to make it more interesting. Be sure to let children explore these materials at their own pace! It's especially important not to force them to touch things or to put their hands in wet or sticky substances.

Links and resources

Website Link

Positive Eye

<https://www.positiveeye.co.uk/resources-2/>

A range of free resources -**Paths to Literacy**

<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/stay-home-activities-children-visual-impairments>

Stay at home activities for children with visual impairment and a range of resources for visually impaired learners

Fine Motor Skills Activities - **Pinterest**

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/sensorysun/fine-motor-skills-for-children-with-visual-impairm/>

Twinkl

free access to Twinkl resources for primary and secondary ages. Use the code: **CVDTWINKLHELPS**

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

Other useful links:

Website Links:

RNIB Everyday Living – Resources for parents or partially sighted children – **Encouraging Independence**

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-family-friends-and-carers-resources-parents-blind-or-partially-sighted-3>

<https://www.victa.org.uk/>

<https://www.look-uk.org/>