

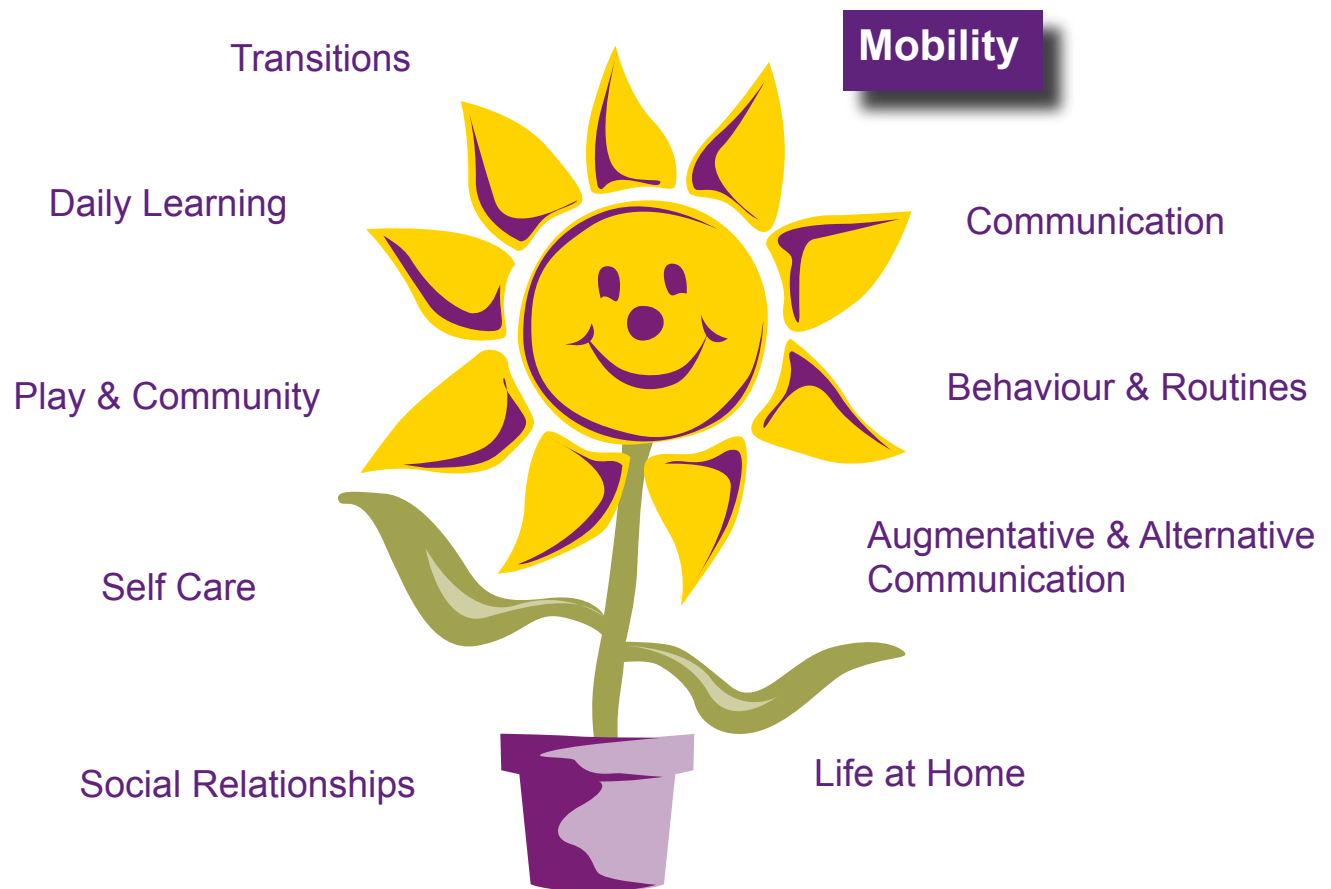
Helping you set goals for your child

At Therapy Focus, we recognise and value your role as parents being the experts on your child and family.

Our Services are a support to help your child reach their potential and enhance their participation in the community. Educating and empowering you to help your child is

an important part of our holistic therapy services.

This brochure is a starting point for discussion about your child and your family. It offers ideas to create new activities your child is able to do with encouragement and support.



The way we work

- We recognise that family is central to therapy. Families bring knowledge and expertise about their child to help identify the child's needs, develop goals and practice strategies.
- The family, therapy team and teaching staff work together to identify problems and share ideas. Each has a role to play in developing the child's skills.
- We use every opportunity in the family's and child's routine and environment to develop skills.
- Therapists work as a multidisciplinary collaborative team, sharing skills to meet the needs of the child.
- We recognise the child's strengths and how they can be developed to increase participation in the activities of life.

MOBILITY

Mobility means the having the capacity to move around either by walking, through the use of a wheelchair or by another means of transport such as a car or bike.

It also includes the ability to:

- Sit and stand or move body position
- Move and handle objects using fine motor skills
- Walk with the use of a walking aid
- Use transport such as buses or cars

Being mobile is important for your child's independence and ability to keep up with peers and join in activities.

To help your child move around, therapists may recommend various aids and equipment. These can include:

- Splints/orthoses
- Wheelchairs
- Standing frame
- Walking frame
- Bike or adapted trikes

As your child grows or their needs change, the prescribed aids and equipment may need to be replaced or modified. For example when using a wheelchair, the seat, arm rest, head rest and foot plate need to be at a comfortable height for your child and will therefore require regular adjustment as they grow.

Strategies to assist in your child's mobility and movement

- **Use Every Opportunity** by allowing your child to participate whenever possible throughout their normal routine. This allows them to improve their skills through participation in everyday activities.



- **Practice** doing a small piece of an activity each day. Children find it easier to learn new skills in smaller sections.
- **Be Consistent** with the words and signs used to instruct your child, and try to keep instructions short and simple.
- Ensure that there is enough **Time** available for your child to participate in activities without feeling rushed.
- Allow your child to **Observe** other family members performing motor skills. Modelling appropriate behaviours is a fantastic way to develop skills.
- **Use Encouragement** to let your child know they are doing a great job. This will help them to keep motivated and boost their self-esteem.
- **Be Patient and Calm** when teaching your child new skills.
- **Use Small Steps** by breaking the activity down into small, manageable steps, which can be learnt one at a time.

Example

Harry is an eleven year old boy who loves watching all types of sports and would like to participate. Harry has Down Syndrome and often has difficulty with hand-eye coordination.



Goal: To successfully catch a ball so Harry can participate in a game of basketball with his classmates.

Strategies: The Physiotherapist demonstrates some steps and strategies to Harry's teachers and family such as rolling balls to each other on the floor; then try 'throw and catch' while sitting (throwing is easier than catching). Progress to standing with Harry's back in the corner of the wall for support. Finally Harry may be ready to try standing alone to throw and catch. Harry's teacher suggested using soft balls first, before trying a large basketball.

Outcome: After a term of one-on-one and small group ball games, Harry participated in his first school basketball game, successfully catching and throwing a large basketball several times.

Useful/Helpful Services:

Recreation and Sport Network: Provides information and support for people with disabilities who want to be involved in community recreation and sport.

Ph: (08) 9201 8900

www.rec.net.au

Riding for the Disabled:

Is a voluntary, not for profit organisation that provides riding instructions and other activities associated with riding and harnesses for people with disabilities.

Ph: (08) 9296 4655

<http://www.rda.org.au>

RAC wheelchair breakdown service:

Provides a free repair service for electric wheelchair users. Register your chair by calling RAC Insurance (08) 9421 4444. If a breakdown occurs, call 13 11 11 and a serviceman will attend any minor punctures or electrical problems to get you going again.

Beach and Bush wheelchair hire:

Is available for loan through the Equipment Provision Program of WA (an initiative from Therapy Focus and TADWA). To hire, call Therapy Focus on (08) 9478 9500.

Department of Planning and Infrastructure:

Provides a step by step guide to helping your child learn to ride a bike. This information can be found under 'Cycling Fact Sheets' as a link named 'Riding Skills and Rules'.

www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling



Glossary of terms

AFO: Ankle Foot Orthoses to keep your child's ankle well supported for comfort and function.

Co-ordination: When muscles work together in harmony to move the body.

Dyspraxia: Difficulty in smoothly coordinating muscles. It is often due to a problem in thinking out, planning out, and executing planned movements or tasks.

Fine motor skills: The ability to perform small, precise movements quickly and smoothly

Gait: A technical description of child's walking ability and pattern often used by Physiotherapists.

Gross motor skills: Skills that involve large body movements, e.g. walking, running, jumping and riding a bike.

Hand eye co-ordination: The ability to connect the information received through the eyes to control, guide, and direct the hands in the accomplishment of a task, e.g. handwriting or catching a ball. It uses the eyes to direct attention and the hands to execute the movement.



Motor planning: The ability to think through a new task requiring body movements and then perform that movement. Problems may be seen in some children and adults difficulty with learning a new movement skill or a new sport.

Motor sequencing: The ability to think through which part of a movement task needs to be done first, then next in order to complete a pattern of movement, e.g. throwing a ball.

Orthoses: Splints that provide special support for the hands or feet.

Orthotics: Inserts that go into your child's shoes to support the arch of the foot.

Proprioception: The ability to sense of where the body is in space. Some children with difficulty in this area may have trouble with walking and balance.

Proximal stability: The ability to maintain the body's central position steady while moving the arms or legs.