

**URBAN  
SAINTS**

**RESOURCE**



# Limited Mobility and Wheelchair Users

Effective support for young  
people with additional needs

# Limited Mobility and Wheelchair Users

Young people with limited mobility or who are wheelchair users can and will have a wide range of reasons for this. They may have been born with a medical condition, had a serious accident or a sudden illness. Whatever the reason for their limited mobility or wheelchair use, there are ways in which your group can be more sympathetic to their additional needs.



## Key issues

- Arriving at the building.
- Getting into the building.
- Access throughout the building.
- Use of toilet facilities.
- Being treated differently because of their limited mobility/wheelchair use.

# Support strategies for your group

- **Provide marked out parking spaces** for parents with young people with limited mobility or who are wheelchair users to use. Make sure these are as close as possible to the entrance to the building.
- In the absence of a car park, **try to reserve a 'drop off' point** near the entrance.
- **All internal and external areas of the building should be leveled** and have ramped access points. Some young people with limited mobility find ramps difficult to negotiate so this should not be the only means of entry.
- **If you have more than one young person who is a wheelchair user**, don't put them all together as this highlights their disability. In the same way, don't position them in an aisle or near an emergency exit for safety reasons.
- **Screens may become difficult** for young people who are wheelchair users to see when everyone else is standing, so provide copies of songs or presentations for those who remain seated to use.
- **Wheelchair accessible toilets** should be provided, and these should never be used for storage.

- **All ramps and steps should have a handrail.**
- **When talking to a wheelchair user**, sit next to them so that you can gain eye contact with them more easily.
- **A wheelchair is part of the users personal space** – don't move it without asking and don't lean on it!



- If your building and strategy includes all of the above, please **display the International Symbol of Access (ISA)** at the entrance to your building and on any literature to show that you provide suitable facilities for those with limited mobility.
- **Personal care** Some people with limited mobility may need assistance with activities such as going to the toilet or getting changed. Discuss these needs in advance and make sure you are aware of what assistance might be needed. Staff/Volunteers should only assist young people with personal care if they have an enhanced DBS check with barred list and your organisations safeguarding procedures should always be followed.

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**Further Information:** Through the Roof [throughtheroof.org](http://throughtheroof.org)

Research shows that young people with additional needs are more likely to be abused than their peers (NSPCC) This increased vulnerability is due to a number of factors including communication differences, increased dependence on caregivers, social isolation and a higher likelihood that warning signs would be missed or misinterpreted. As a youth leader it's therefore important to be especially alert to changes in behaviour and wellbeing and discuss any concerns with a safeguarding lead at the earliest opportunity.



**This resource is just one  
of the many ways we're  
here to support you!**

Discover more free tools, training  
and resources to equip you in  
disciplining young people.

[urbansaints.org](http://urbansaints.org)

This resource has been adapted from our Invited to Belong Team Training Kit.



If you're interested in helping your team become more aware and welcoming of young people with additional needs, you can explore our Invited to Belong Team Training Kit at [urbansaints.org/resources](http://urbansaints.org/resources)

The original content of this resource was created in partnership with **Youthscape** as part of the Invited to Belong resource.