

GUIDE
DOGS



N. Ireland

Movement Matters

Habilitation services from
Guide Dogs Northern Ireland



Children and Young People's Services

Children with vision impairment often need to be specifically taught the basic skills and concepts that develop naturally in their sighted peers.

Our Movement Matters habilitation service helps your child develop movement, orientation and independent living skills.

Guide Dogs' children and young people's services include the full range of services previously provided by our sister organisation, Blind Children UK.



What can Movement Matters offer your family?

Babies benefit immensely through our specialist support to stimulate movement, through play and games, to help them reach expected developmental milestones.

Children can learn how to explore their world, developing their confidence and independence.

Teenagers and young adults can learn the skills they need to reach their potential as adults.

Assessment

Finding the right support for your child should start with a thorough and expert assessment of your child's abilities, developmental progress and needs.

If needed, Guide Dogs' Habilitation Specialists can carry out this assessment.

Movement Skills

Your child may need specific help to encourage them to move around, confidently and safely. We're here to support them throughout their journey to adulthood.

- Encouraging reach, balance, grasp, posture and movement, using games and activities.
- Maximising listening skills and useful vision.
- Spatial concepts like understanding left and right.
- Using low vision aids and technology.
- Orientation, road safety and use of public transport.





Skills for Life and other support

Your child may need specific help to reach their full potential - from achieving expected developmental milestones to becoming a more confident and independent young adult:

- Organisation skills such as putting things in the same place each time so that they can be easily found.
- Confidence in using everyday items such as kitchen utensils.
- Social skills such as communicating effectively.
- Personal care skills like cleaning teeth or pouring a drink.
- Money management and shopping skills.
- Personal safety.
- Familiarisation visits and transition support, for example from secondary school to college.
- Signposting to help you make contact with other agencies and groups.

Movement Matters parents' guidance days

Through these informal, interactive events, we can help you explore possibilities for your child, advise on how you can support them and give you the opportunity to meet other parents in similar situations. Parents' events are led by qualified staff who can answer your questions and signpost you to further information and support.

Other services

Guide Dogs can also offer help with:

- Cutting through the jargon and providing everyday, practical solutions to help you provide the best support for your child.
- Help for schools and other organisations to develop an accessible environment for your child.

Access Technology

Advice on the most appropriate technology and sensory equipment to help children with a vision impairment study and play.

As part of this service we offer a grants programme enabling children to access the technology they need, where no source of statutory funding is available.

CustomEyes Books®

Large-print recreational and educational books for toddlers to young adults.

Guide Dogs in Northern Ireland works shoulder to shoulder with local Trusts and other organisations to support children and young people with a vision impairment to reach their potential.

The Movement Matters habilitation service is available to children and young people with a vision impairment and their families at any point from birth to age 25.



Contact us on:

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**Services for children and young people
with vision impairment**

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