

# Ideas for Adapting Equipment

The aim for all children at childcare/preschool is to be included with other children in play and to learn to be as independent as possible in play and life skills.

The child with cerebral palsy needs the same opportunities as other children.

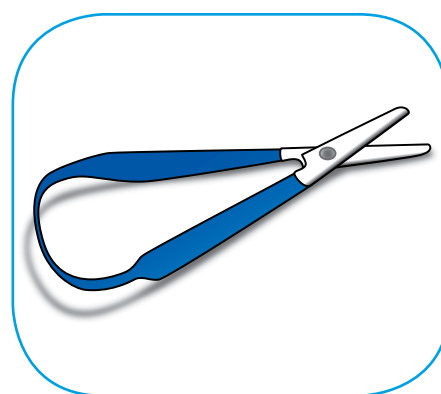
Sometimes it may be necessary to make changes to equipment and plan how materials will be presented, so that the child with cerebral palsy can participate as much as possible in all areas of play and activities. However, use the same equipment for all children where possible.

Whatever the activity, ensure the child is positioned well with good posture and balance. Some children may need more supportive seating on the floor or a chair while for others a simple adjustment to the centre's chair or a footrest may be sufficient. For some children, the use of a standing frame may enable them to participate more independently.

## Ideas to consider:

### Art and craft activities

- Non slip mat can be used under paper or boxes.
- Brushes - using thicker and/or shorter handles on brushes may make them easier to hold. Add some tubing to the handle of thinner brushes or try knob brushes.
- Knobs can be attached to stamps to make them easier to grip.
- Cotton buds can be stuck in a styrofoam block.
- Use slope boards on table tops to hold papers for painting or drawing for children who have difficulty drawing on a flat surface or have visual difficulties.
- A variety of easy to use scissors are available eg self opening, spring-loaded, styrex or mounted.
- Consider using thicker textas, knob crayons or bent textas as alternatives.
- Holders can be used for brushes, textas or crayons.
- Think about the height and stability of the easel.



## Puzzles

- Larger knobs on puzzles - corks can be stuck onto existing small knobs to make them easier to hold.
- Non-slip matting can be used to stabilise puzzles.

## General activities

- Curtain rings attached to objects such as parachutes, zippers or pull-a-long toys make them easier to hold.
- Switch toys - battery operated toys can be operated by a simple push switch (jellybean switch). Similarly, specialised software and/or a modified switch can be used with a mouse to operate a computer.
- Phone books covered in contact are ideal to put under a child's feet if his/her chair is too high.



Each child with cerebral palsy has individual needs.  
In partnership with the child and their family,  
The Spastic Centre team can advise on their needs.