

How to Guide a child or young

1. Offer your arm to the child or young person (CYP). He should hold your arm just above the elbow with his fingers on the inside and thumb on the outside. Keep your arm in close to your body so that your companion can detect your movements. Very small children should hold your wrist or finger. Note there is a difference between holding hands and sighted guide, where the child should take some responsibility. There are good reasons for using formal sighted guide, do not allow over familiarity.
2. Walk so that you are half a step ahead of the CYP. He should be tucked in behind you so that his shoulder is in line with yours.
3. Try and avoid uneven surfaces and walk at a speed comfortable to the child.
4. Talk to the CYP and give information about where you are and what's coming up, without overwhelming him.
5. Narrow spaces - When going through a narrow space, let him know. Move your guiding arm diagonally across your back so that he tucks in behind you out of danger.
6. Doorways - Using the narrow space procedure, with the CYP on the same side as the door hinges, open the door with your guiding arm so that he can feel whether the door opens inwards or outwards. The CYP should then take responsibility for the door so that you both walk through with the door closing safely behind you.



person with little or no sight

7. Changing direction – if you are just turning right or left, you can indicate this with your guiding arm. Reinforce verbally if the CYP is still uncertain of right and left and be wary of too wide a sweep.
8. If going in the opposite direction, With arms still linked, turn to face each other. The CYP should drop the arm that he/she is holding and take your other arm with the other hand. Turn outwards and you can move off in the opposite direction.
9. Kerbs and roads - When you are approaching a kerb, tell the CYP whether it is `kerb up' or `kerb down'. Pause slightly before stepping up or down and he will feel the change in arm movement. Always cross the road using the shortest distance. Use a pedestrian crossing if there is one. Never rush and take risks.
10. Stairs - Say when you are approaching stairs and indicate if they go up or down. If possible the CYP should be on the side with the hand rail. Help him or her find the hand rail. Step onto the first step and pause, he will feel your arm position change. He should follow one step behind as you continue up or down the stairs. Be particularly careful on `down' stairs.
11. When helping him to locate a seat, guide his hand to the back of the chair. The child should then be able to sit down. In a cinema or theatre indicate the back of the row in front for him to follow.



If you need further help or assistance please contact:

Education Habilitation Service
Priestley Smith School
Beeches Road
Great Barr
Birmingham
B42 2PY

Telephone : 0121 325 3904

Email mobility@priestley.bham.sch.uk



[Birmingham City Council](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk)



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