

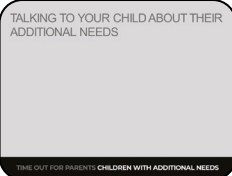
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Talking to your child about their additional needs

Time _____ to _____ (15 mins)

Equipment needed

- PowerPoint slides 3.5a to 3.5b



Slide 3.5a

Talk about

We may feel we want to protect our child from knowing their diagnosis in case it makes them more aware of being different.

However, children are often the first to know that they are different in some way, even if they can't tell you.

The more intelligent the child, the more intensely he or she may feel the frustration of additional needs.

A child can be greatly helped to feel less isolated and inadequate if the lines of communication in the family are kept open.

How have you explained their additional needs to your child?



Ideas

- Special time may provide an opportunity for a conversation about their additional needs.
- Think about when it would be a good time to talk about this with your child. For instance, it will need to be when you are both calm and relaxed.
- Allow plenty of time to talk with them and allow time afterwards when they have been able to think it over.
- Think about how they might react and how to prepare for this. For instance, they might need something to do, a safe place to be angry, or just a quiet, calming place to relax.



Children need information, explained at their developmental level and in language they can understand.



Slide 3.5b

Talk naturally and simply about their additional needs when the opportunity arises.

Explain it in a way a small child may understand, for example, a story.

The whole family will benefit from talking about this subject.

Remember:

Not talking about it may make your child feel more isolated and inadequate.

Children may need to be able to explain their additional needs to others.

Note: For more help on this topic, there is an informative article by the Churchill Center and School to help you explain learning difficulties to your child. It is from an American source but applicable for UK parents: churchillstl.org/learning-disability-resources/explaining-learning-disabilities/