



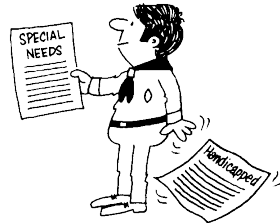
for
SPECIAL NEEDS

“I can’t cope with a handicapped child in my Group”

WHY NOT?

Say Handicapped and many people immediately think of some one in a wheel chair, or someone severely mentally handicapped.

But today, we say “Special Needs”, not Handicapped. We ALL have Special Needs; perhaps something as little as wearing spectacles. Have you ever tried heading a football while wearing specs? I once broke mine! Even walking in the rain can be difficult.



To misquote George Orwell:

All people have Special Needs, but some people have more Special Needs than others.

Who hasn't had at least one young person with asthma? ----- has to pull out of active games occasionally? Or some one with a food allergy----- “don't let him have orange juice”.

You've coped with that. You **can** cope with other needs.

Scouting is about the development of Members -----

Including we Leaders!

So, let's develop!!

Terminology

Now the boring bits! But we do need to try and understand some jargon:

- **Impairment.** The loss of an ability or function because part of the body is defective or missing. An eye that does not see, a leg that is missing; a brain that has a defective memory. These are examples of impairment.
- **Disability.** The lack of ability to perform a function or activity that most people can. This is caused by something restricting normal functions. Disabilities may be difficulties in seeing, in hearing, in running,
- **Handicap.** The limitation of a disabled person's ability to lead a normal life. A disability becomes a handicap when **our** attitudes and physical obstacles make it difficult to perform ordinary tasks. A boy in a wheelchair is handicapped when steps prevent him entering the building by himself. A blind girl is handicapped when she is not taught to read Braille.
- **Rehabilitation.** The process by which the co-ordinated use of all possible measures ---- medical, educational, social and vocational ---- assist people with disabilities to achieve the highest possible levels of functioning.
- **Integration.** Does this need explaining? Help the young person become a Member of your Section

Through Integration, we can help with Rehabilitation.

- **Diagnosis.** This is a label; it tells us what the condition is; but not what the young person's abilities and problems are. These are far more relevant to our task.

So, where do I start? How do I start

Advice here must be general. There are many Special Needs, and every one must be treated individually.

However, if you do have a general plan, you won't be caught on the hop.

First you need:

INFORMATION.

You can't ask the right questions if you're not prepared:

What is the problem?

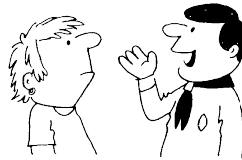
How does it affect the young person?

How could it affect other Members?

How could it affect your programme?

So, there are limitations; but there must also be strong points. What are they?

Who can answer these questions?



Firstly the young person and parents/carers.



But you may feel you want to talk to others. Many other people will often be involved: teachers, therapists, nurses, doctors. They can only give you specific information about an individual with proper consent, but they can give you general information. Remember **so can your Special Needs Adviser.**

Research. The in word, perhaps, but there is a wealth of information available.

Our Headquarters produce a series of Factsheets covering some Special Needs.

For many conditions, there are many Patient Associations.

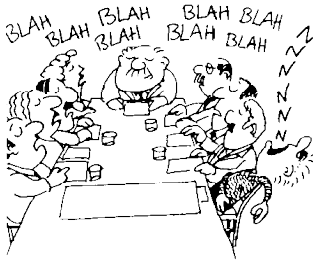
And nowadays, surf the Internet.

What next?

Involve everyone in your Group;

Scouters

and young people



Once you think you can cope, speak to your GSL and other Scouters. Remember, your Special; Needs Adviser is always available.

Every young person joining our Association should have the right to progress through the Sections. Leaders of the older Sections need to be involved. Some of the worst publicity comes when a Leader doesn't want to accept someone from a younger Section. Talk about it at the Group Scouters' Meeting.

Remember, too, to talk to the Members of your Section. Quite often, some of them will go to the same School as your candidate. This can help enormously. In any event, young people are usually less prejudiced than adults

Initial Visits. Like any new entrant, he will need to have a look to be sure he wants to join. This will help you to assess the situation; to be surer that you can cope.

Extra Help. Will you need extra help? If so, where will you get this help?

Read on!

How can I get extra help?

Try the older Sections, Explorer Scouts and Network. The Explorer Section has provision for Young Leaders. Who knows? -- this could be just an experience an Explorer Scout or Network Member would welcome.



And don't forget your Scout Fellowship. How often do we ask these Members to help?



Parents, or friends of parents might be prepared to help. (Don't forget the Confidential Enquiry if they do) Who knows, you could make it so much fun, you've recruited a permanent Helper/Leader!

Specific Considerations.**“Young People First”**

Remember not to be totally alone with a young person. Sometimes they will require more privacy than others. Talk to them in another room by all means, but leave the door open and remember to be sure another adult is within sight.

Should they require help with hygiene, talk to the family and agree a plan; who should give assistance, and how.

Risk Assessment.

You have, of course, carried out a risk assessment on your Headquarters, but you may need to review it.

If the young person is in a wheelchair, there may be projections at just the height to catch their head (e.g. work tops). In case of fire, will they be able to negotiate the fire exit quickly and safely.

Programme Content.

Especially for games, you may need to think about some alterations. Can someone in a wheelchair play dodgeball? Yes! But can they hide in the bushes or travel easily over rough ground?

As far as training is concerned, the new Programme helps enormously. The emphasis is far more on participation rather than reaching a particular level of skill. Your Sectional ADCs will be able to offer advice if needed.

Age Ranges.

When appropriate, it is now possible for a Member with Special Needs to stay in a Section beyond the usual age range. This needs the agreement of the District Commissioner and the County Adviser (Special Needs). See Factsheet 250045.

And Finally.

Having accepted the young person, review (with the family) progress regularly. Make sure everyone is aware of problems before they become insurmountable.

Contacts:

Sectional ADCs and ACCs

ACC (Activities) and Safety Officer

Child Protection Co-ordinator

Adviser (Special Needs)

Group Scout Leader and other Group Scouters

Every one is there waiting to help you. Call us!!

Some phone numbers:

Vince Murphy

(Child Protection Co-ordinator)

0161 626 0414

Dave Saunders

(ACC {Activities} & Safety Co-ordinator)

0161 773 6528

Peter North

(Special Needs Adviser)

0161 766 2677

John Woolley

(County Commissioner)

0161 626 6805

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