

ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES

11

**This module covers
the following information:**

Assistive products and resources

What are assistive products?

Benefits of assistive products

- Supportive seating
- Wheelchairs
- Glasses
- Adapted cutlery
- Communication boards

Monitoring progress

Sharing emotions and feelings



ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES

Important: This module can be run alone or at the same time as positioning. You can use this module to advise on assistive products when there are less rehabilitation services available.



Materials

One A4 piece of paper for each participant to make a hat from for the ice-breaker, flipchart, pens, pictures of children with different types of assistive products.



Icebreaker

Ask everyone to make a simple paper hat from their sheet of paper. Each person then writes what they are called on the hat. This can be 'parent' or 'job description' or 'nickname' etc. In pairs, everyone can then describe the names that they have on their hat.

Explain that over the past sessions we have learned together about ourselves, our children, families and communities.



Explain

By the end of module 11, you will:

1. Understand what assistive products are.
2. Understand how assistive products can increase your child's participation in every day life.
3. Know how assistive products can be made and provided.

WHAT ARE ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS?



Ask

"What are assistive products?"



Explain

Explain anything that helps your child do everyday activities on her own is an 'assistive product'. This helps her be independent and take part in society. There are many kinds of assistive products.

Can you name some assistive products?

- Glasses
- Walking frame
- Wheelchair
- Adapted cutlery
- Toileting Aid
- Walking stick
- Communication board

Facilitator Tips:

- Assistive products are often not used properly because parents don't understand why they are important. Sometimes they are also not shown how to use them. Home environments may also limit use: a paper chair is not suitable in a home where it might get wet, and a large wheelchair will not be helpful if there is not enough space to move around in it. During your home visit, or this session, ask participants to demonstrate to each other how the assistive product is used. This will help you to identify their understanding, and reasons for why it is or is not used.
- Manage expectations from the beginning!
Explain: **not ALL CHILDREN will benefit from assistive products** like an expensive wheelchair.
- In the community mapping exercise, local carpenters may have been identified. Encourage the group to identify how they can form a good relationship with a local carpenter who can make low cost devices such as corner chairs. Decide together how to ensure that they are of good quality. Locally made devices can also be fixed locally if needed.

Put up the pictures of assistive products, and children using assistive products:



Photo by: The International Committee of the Red Cross



Photo by: Motivation



Photo by: CECHE Foundation

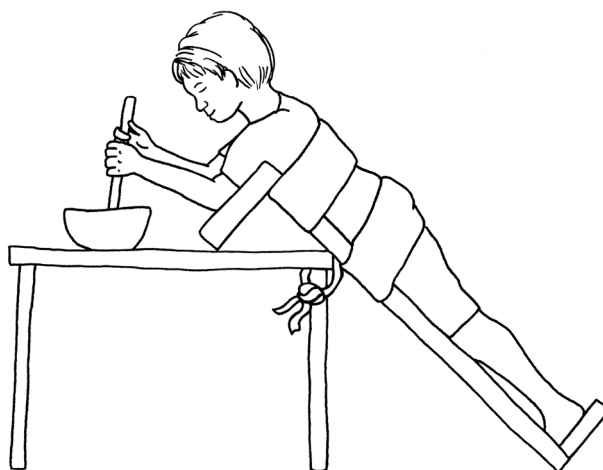


Photo by: The International Committee of the Red Cross

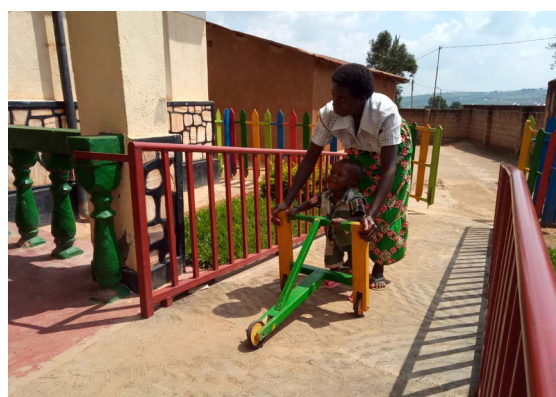


Photo by: CECHE Foundation



Ask

“What is happening in the picture? What are the devices made from? Why do some children have certain devices and not others? Are any made locally of low cost materials? Are there any children without ‘assistive products’? Why?”

Discuss:

- Some children won’t need an ‘assistive product’.
- Find out what your child needs to see whether having one would help her become independent.
- Each child’s abilities are different, so different assistive products should be used.

BENEFITS OF ASSISTIVE PRODUCTS



Ask

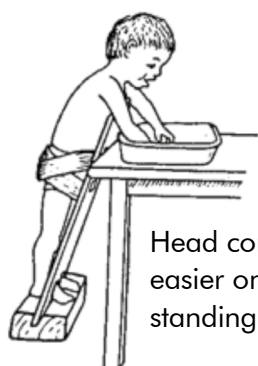
"How can a standing frame help?"



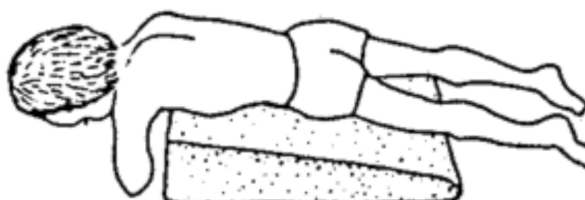
Explain

- Standing frames support your child when standing.
- Standing is an important position for your child to learn.
- Many children who can't stand lie down a lot. In a standing frame your child can see what is going on around her, play and interact with others. This will help her development.
- A prone stander supports children who find it hard to hold their body up by making it easier to lift the head. Your child leans forward on the device, which also leans forward.

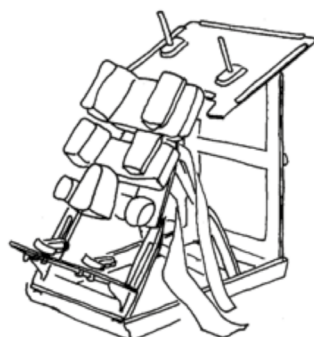
Discuss the 'good' and 'poor' positions in the diagrams below.



Head control
easier on prone
standing board



Child is unable to lift head up in prone



Prone stander



Child standing badly in an
upright standing frame



Child standing well in
a standing frame

Supportive Seating



Ask

"How can your child benefit from a supportive seat?"

- Sitting upright helps your child stay healthy by helping her digestion and blood circulation.
- Stops your child from getting injuries that disable her more, and can help her bones to grow strong.
- Your child is able to make eye contact with people around her, which helps her communicate.
- Supporting your child while sitting can help her control her head, hands and concentrate for longer. This will help her develop self-care (eating, toileting, dressing), playing, learning.

A corner seat gives less support so should be used for children with more ability. They are good for children up to 5 yrs old for floor activities.

Pelvis: upright

Hip joints: 90 degrees, knees slightly apart

Knees and ankles: 90 degrees

Back: straight

Shoulders: relaxed with arms free to move

Head: upright in the middle, chin tucked in

Side view: Ear, shoulder, hip – in line

From the front: Eyes, shoulders, hips, knees are all level



Wheelchairs



Ask

"How can your child benefit from using a wheelchair?"

- Helps a child who cannot walk or move alone be independent.
- Can help a child get to school and into the community to play with other children.

However, not all children who find movement hard will benefit from a wheelchair.

To check if a wheelchair is right for your child, the World Health Organisation (WHO) says a wheelchair should:

- Meet the wheelchair user's needs.
- Be usable in their home environment.
- Fit well and be supportive.
- Be safe and last well.
- Be available and can be maintained at an affordable cost.

There are many different kinds of wheelchairs. They always need to be fitted to your child by someone trained, so you should ask your therapist on a home visit. If the wheelchair does not fit your child properly, she can become more disabled.

Walking Frames



Ask

"How can a walking frame help your child?"

A walking frame will help if your child can stand on her own but finds it hard to walk. It will help her move around and be active in your community.

Glasses



Photo by: Priya Morjaria

In Bangladesh 180 children with cerebral palsy were tested for visual impairment. Around 32% had poor vision and 18% needed glasses.

Adapted cutlery



Ask

"When would you use adapted cutlery?"

You can make a spoon or fork easier to hold by making the handle bigger. You can also hold your child's hand in place with a scarf.



Photo by: Enablement

Communication boards



Ask

"How can a communication board help your child?"

- If your child finds speech difficult, a communication board helps her express her needs with pictures.
- This helps your child communicate with other children and adults, and be included in your community.



Photo by: Enablement



Photo by: Enablement



Activity 1

Ask each participant to demonstrate how they help their child to use their assistive products. Ask each person to explain what they are doing, and how the assistive product helps their child to participate in everyday life.

MONITORING PROGRESS



Think back to session 4 where you looked at positioning and moving.

Take Home Messages:

- Identify helpful devices that make positions for everyday activities easier.
- Every child is different, so your child may have different abilities.



Ask

"What two things have you learned today that you will share with someone else at home? "

SHARING EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS



Ask

"How did this session feel? Did it raise any emotions or feelings that you did not expect? How have you been feeling this week"

Allow time for discussion and interaction with each other. This should be a guided session between everyone with only short prompting from facilitators.

