

How do we know my child has a disability?

For some babies it is obvious from the day that they are born that they have a disability. But for others, the family may not know anything is different at first. It is only as time goes on they may notice that their baby is very floppy and weak. It may cry a lot with a soft or high pitched cry, or may be silent. Sleep may not be easy, or the baby may always want to sleep. It may not suck well.

As the baby gets a bit older the family may worry that it does not act like other babies of the same age - maybe it does not lift it's head, or maybe does not turn to the sounds of his brothers and sisters playing about, and perhaps it is not responding to it's mother's face or bright objects around, and where is that first real smile?

The family may be concerned, and yes the baby may have a disability. A discussion with the community health nurse or a visit to the doctor or to the hospital will be necessary so that the parents can find out about their baby.

How can we help babies and young children with disability?

By developing a friendship with the baby and including your baby in the day to day life of your family.

The little baby must learn that they are a worthwhile young person; that they are adored and cherished by the whole family!!

This takes much more time and effort than with other babies because the baby with disability may not be able to see, hear or control its body in the same way as other babies.



As parents and carers of young ones such as this we have to take extra time to make close contact with the baby.

Most children learn how to walk, talk and do things for themselves in the natural course of their every day lives - but you may have to help your baby with many steps through their development that other babies learn with no help.

You and your family need to spend extra time with your child, teaching them to roll over, crawl, walk, talk, and look after themselves, and **not** to leave them lying alone in the house - this can make their disability worse! Even if you are not sure what your baby understands, or if they can hear or see, it is vital to bring your baby to experience all parts of day to day life.

