

Lifting and carrying (1/2)

You must take into consideration how the child is going to react to the movement.

Children have a right to know what is about to happen to them and to be involved in decisions about such activities: why the child needs to be lifted or carried, and about how and when that lifting or carrying will take place.

Wherever possible children should be given choices about who does the lifting and carrying and as much control over the process as they can cope with.

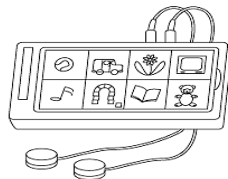
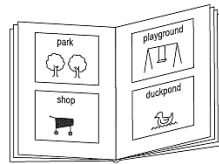
Impact of sensory and cognitive deficits on lifting and carrying a child

Try to adjust your language or use gestures to enable the child to understand what is about to happen. A child who has problems with perceptual processing may find lifting and moving tasks difficult. If the child is unable to judge distances, depth and speed or does not know right from left, the child may have difficulty following directions or judging how far or how fast to move. Carers need to be aware of these issues for the child and adjust their preparation and handling of the manoeuvre.

The environment in which the lifting and moving takes place has a great influence on the way in which the child reacts. If children cannot focus on the task because there is so much going on around them, sudden noises may startle them, their muscle tone and body posture will change in response to the environmental stimuli and this may make it more difficult to lift and move them. Carers must always be aware of children who may experience pain due to their disability and minimize this wherever possible.

Children who have a sensory deficit such as a visual impairment may not be able to see you approach with equipment and may be startled when suddenly touched or handled.

You will have to describe exactly what is going to happen and where you plan to move the child to so that the child can adjust and prepare themselves.



Children with a hearing impairment may not be adequately prepared unless you have given the appropriate visual cues or used the appropriate communication method.

Children who use augmentative communication aids may no longer have access to these when being lifted and may be unable to tell you that they are not yet ready for the move to take place.

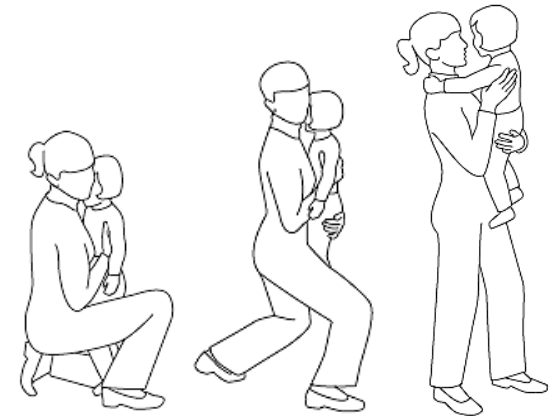
Children who have a learning disability may not understand what is expected or being asked of them.

Children with Cerebral Palsy

Lifting a young child from the floor

Correct handling and an awareness of posture can reduce the strain on carers for such transitions when the child has to be moved from a low level to a higher level in one movement.

Lifting a child on to and off a changing mat placed on the floor can be risky for carers' backs. Where possible the carer should kneel down close to the child. Roll the child on to the carer's forearm, placing a second hand under the child's pelvis, and raise the child, bringing the child close into the carer's body. Carers should then step up into a half-kneeling position, adjusting their hold on the child if necessary. They can then rise to a standing position, having 'staged' the lift from the floor, being aware of their own posture as they do so.



Lifting a child out of a cot

Lifting even a small child out of a cot can involve risks to carers' backs. To reduce those risks careful handling from an early stage should be encouraged.

How you approach the child and how you use your voice may affect the child's reaction to the lifting or carrying

Children with increased muscle tone may startle if you speak loudly or suddenly. This may cause a further increase in their muscle tone, making them harder to move. Children who have very low muscle tone may be more prepared for movement if their muscle tone is raised slightly by a more stimulating approach. The speed at which the movement occurs may also affect how the child responds to it. You will have to judge carefully how quickly or slowly you can carry out the task and give the child time to adjust to what is happening.

Lifting a child out of a cot - steps

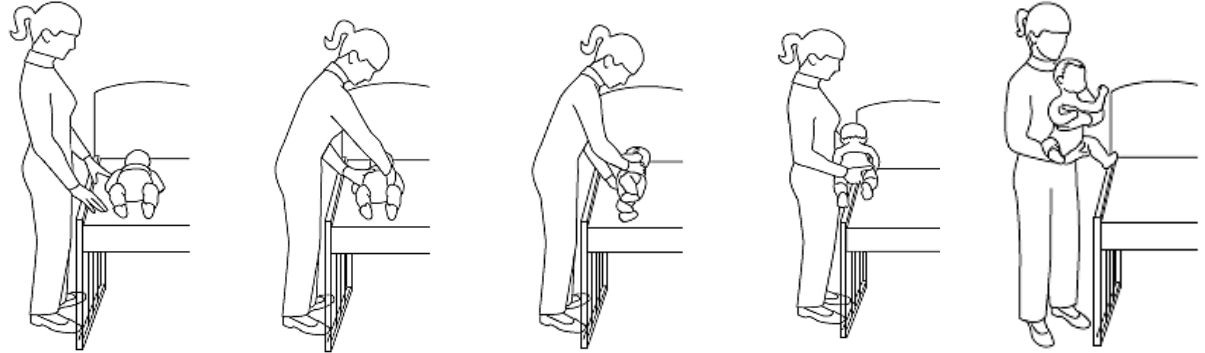
Step 1. Lower the cot side. Prepare yourself: adjust your stance, place your feet in the direction of the movement. Keep your knees slightly relaxed and keep your spine in line.

Step 2. Grasp the baby around the body.

Step 3. Roll the baby towards you, on to your forearm.

Step 4. Place the other hand under the pelvis of the child and lift up and towards your own body, keeping the child close.

Step 5. Adjust your hold on the child, keeping the child close to your body.



Lifting a child from a buggy or Pushchair

Manipulating the environment and adjusting your own posture using your body to assist in the lift can help to reduce the risks concerned.

Lifting a child from a buggy or Pushchair - steps

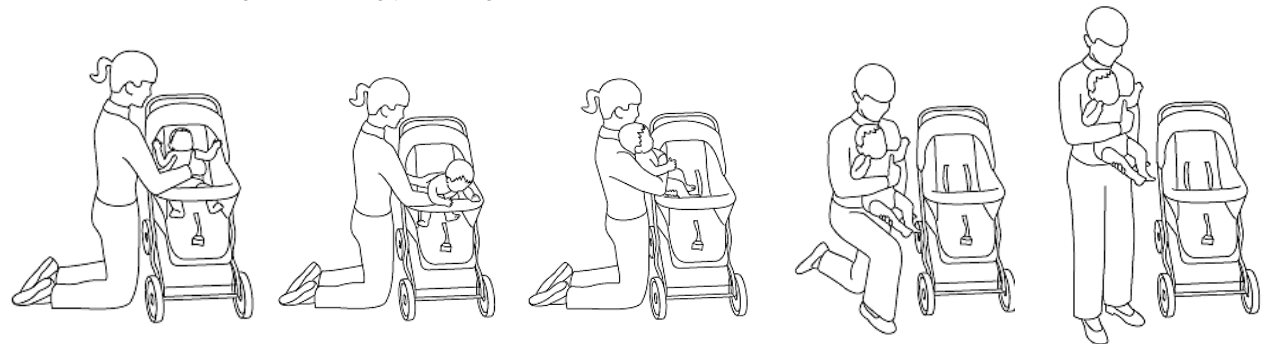
Step 1. Lower your body to the level of the child. Kneel down alongside the buggy.

Step 2. Lean the child forward over your forearm and place other hand under the child's pelvis, gently easing the child out of the buggy.

Step 3. Bring the child close in to your body and adjust your hand hold as necessary.

Step 4. Raise one leg to assume a half-kneel standing position.

Step 5. Rise to standing, transferring your weight from one foot to the other.



Back care for carers

It is important to lift and carry the child correctly, protecting both the child and yourself. Wherever possible you need to encourage active or assisted movement from the child as this may avoid the need for you to lift the child's total body weight. Ask the child to help as much as possible. This type of approach will help to encourage the development of the child's independence skills and provide the child with a learning opportunity.