

Myth Buster

Protecting disabled children: Myths and facts

| Myth | Fact |
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| Nobody would abuse or neglect a disabled child... | Research shows they are more than 3 times more likely to be abused. |
| Disabled children are well protected because of all the helpers they have... | Because they may rely on so many people to help them, often with personal care, they are at greater risk of someone abusing their trust. |
| Disabled children are not attractive to abusers... | Abusers are usually driven by desire to dominate and some disabled children can be seen as particularly helpless. |
| You can't expect disabled children to be as well dressed and turned out as other children... | When loved and cared for disabled children are as well turned out as any other child. |
| Disabled children won't be believed... and will not be able to give evidence in court... | Many abusers think this – but with the right help and support all disabled children can tell or show what happened to them. |
| If the child cannot speak s/he cannot communicate... | A wide range of communication systems and equipment is available, and skilled people to help children communicate. |
| You can't be expected to get the views of disabled children as you can't be sure that they are expressing their own views and opinions... | Article 12 of the UNCRC* is very clear: Every child has a right to express their views regarding all matters that affect them; and for these views to be taken seriously. |
| Abuse doesn't have the same effect on disabled children... | The betrayal of trust and hurt is as acutely felt as by any other child. |

*United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Disabled Parents: Myths and facts

| Myth | Fact |
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| Disabled parents give birth to disabled children... | Most of the impairments disabled people have are not passed on to their children. |
| Disabled parents can't look after their children as well as other parents... | Disabled parents learn ways of looking after their children that work, often from other disabled people. |
| A parent in a wheelchair can't run after children... | True – they know that and learn a whole lot of other ways about how to keep children safe. |
| But... parents with learning disabilities can't care for their children properly... | Research shows that with the right support parents with learning disabilities are just as good as others. |
| But... parents with learning disabilities are still children themselves... | No - they are adults and can be just as responsible as other parents ... but they need support in learning and some other areas of their lives. |
| To be a good parent you have to be able to do everything yourself... | No-one can do everything themselves – some people need more help and support than others and it's OK to get help with your children. |
| Support cannot be provided for ever... | Some people will need lifelong support for a lifelong impairment but choosing the right support will allow progress and change over time. |
| But... long term support for parents is unaffordable | Even when support is needed for the whole of their child's childhood this is much better for the child and less expensive than alternative care. |
| Children are only removed from a parent with good reason... | Around 50% of children of parents with learning disabilities are removed from their parents often without being offered the right sort of support. |