

Teaching Children to Walk Indoors Strategy!!

- ◆ When a new child starts - as soon as they enter the room with their parent/carer, demonstrate what you expect them to do. You can ask a good role model to walk with you in front of the new child (make sure the child is looking). Or (best of all), if they can accept you holding their hand, you can walk with them whilst you say "this is how we walk inside, walking, walking, walking". Singing it is even better (children don't feel as though they are doing something wrong when you are singing) - just make it up using the word 'walk' as above. As soon as they are walking you should PRAISE THEM - TELL ANOTHER ADULT NEARBY "LOOK, SAM IS DOING REALLY GOOD WALKING, I AM REALLY PLEASED WITH HIM".
- ◆ ANYTIME you notice children walking around PRAISE THEM SO THAT OTHERS CAN HEAR - catch them being good! Remember the specific positive praise!!
- ◆ Remind children about walking BEFORE they move off from you. Switch on the walking shoes before you move or leave an area.
- ◆ If you have a child who finds it difficult to remember about walking then you need to anticipate for a while that they will run. All adults working with the child need to be aware that this child needs help to remember to walk. If it is possible then be alongside the child at key moments (if you notice they are about to move from one place to another to play for instance), take their hand, (find out where they want to go) and do a walking song and walk with them. This should be a light hearted fun thing - "walking, walking, walking" (to a nee-naw, nee-naw tune)
- ◆ After following this strategy consistently for about 1 week, if the child is responding well (no fussing) it is time to start thinking about independent walking. After you have walked with the child for part of the way, let go of them and see if they can walk the last bit on their own. If they can it's time for LOTS OF PRAISE, "Well done Sam, that's lovely walking, you are being really careful". If they can't, then bring them back to where they began to run and repeat the walking song strategy or just say "walking, walking, walking" until they get to where they are going.
- ◆ Once you are sure they understand about walking it's just a matter of encouraging/reminding and praise when they get it right.
- ◆ Have a 'Good Walking Week' with special rewards (stickers?) for those children that independently remember to walk - tell their parents/carers when they are collected how pleased you are about the careful walking inside.
- ◆ Remember, the adults need to be very consistent, firm but friendly and praise the child when they get it right. You can use the singing strategy for lots of prompting - washing hands, hanging up coats/aprons etc. If there is a problem about holding hands, ask them which hand they would like to hold and this may distract them.

