

Safe Distancing and Persons with Autism and/or Intellectual Disability

Persons with Autism and/or Intellectual Disability may **have difficulties understanding** and **observing** the safe distancing measures and precautions, such as wearing of masks and not spending unnecessary time outside. They may also exhibit challenging behaviours, which prevent them from keeping a safe distance from other people.

General interaction tips

1. Introduce yourself. Ask for his or her name.
2. Maintain eye contact, but do not glare at the person.
3. **Use simple and clear language.** Use **visual aids** such as objects, photos or pictures to explain.
4. **Be patient.** Give the person time to respond.
5. **Rephrase** what you are saying if the person does not get it the first time.
6. If necessary, move to a calm and quiet environment to speak with the person.

What is autism and intellectual disability?

- Persons with **autism** face difficulties in social interactions. They may find it difficult to maintain eye contact or process verbal information. They may also be uncomfortable with unfamiliar or crowded environments. If they are unable to communicate their discomfort or frustration, they may experience a meltdown (e.g. crying or screaming).
- Persons with **Intellectual Disability (ID)** have a lower IQ, and may have challenges interacting with others socially, and have limited daily living skills.

Safe Distancing and Persons with Visual Impairment or Deafness

Persons with visual impairment may have **trouble seeing safe distancing markers** on the floor. They **rely heavily on other senses to navigate the world**, such as their sense of hearing, touch or smell. Cloth masks may hamper their sense of smell which helps them to navigate.

For persons who are deaf or have hearing loss, wearing of masks may **hinder lip reading and observing facial expressions**.

General interaction tips

Person with visual impairment

1. Identify yourself before initiating a conversation.
2. Offer to read written information, and give specific directional cues.
3. Allow the person to hold your elbow if directions are needed.
4. Inform the person before leaving.

Person who is deaf/hard-of-hearing

1. Get the person's attention first (e.g. by waving).
2. Face the person, and speak clearly without shouting.
3. If the person indicates he/she is unable to hear, switch to alternative ways of communication (e.g. gestures, writing, point to signages or floor markings).
4. You may need to get communication support (e.g. sign language interpreter).

What is Visual impairment or Deafness?

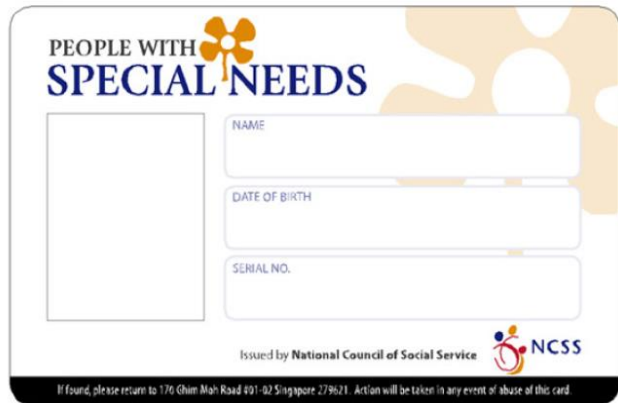
- Persons with **visual impairment** experience moderate to severe visual loss that cannot be corrected to a normal level by medication, operation, or the use of optical lenses. They may use a cane or other visual aids, or show difficulty in seeing.
- Persons who are **deaf/hard-of-hearing** experience partial or complete loss of hearing in one or both ears. In moderate hearing loss, conversations may be hard to hear. In profound hearing loss, no sound is audible. They may wear a hearing aid or use sign language.

To identify a person with disability, you may try one of the following:

1

Check for official identification

Safe Return Card



Public Transport Concession Card



*Please note that these cards are not compulsory.
Not every person with disability will have these cards.*

2

Ask if person attends Special Education (SPED) school or programme by Social Service Agency

1. **[If person is of schooling age]** - Which Special Education (SPED) school are you / your child from?
2. **[If person is above 18 years]** - Which organisation are you / your child from?

See next page for list of SPED schools, and Social Service Agencies who provide services to persons with disabilities.

3

Observe for unusual or difficult-to-control behaviour, or challenges in seeing, hearing or communicating

Thank you for exercising patience and understanding towards persons with disabilities!

List of SPED Schools

- Chaoyang School
- Delta Senior School
- Katong School
- Tanglin School
- Eden School
- Pathlight School
- AWWA School
- Canossian School
- Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) School
- Metta School
- Fernvale Gardens School
- Lee Kong Chian Gardens School
- Towner Gardens School
- Woodlands Gardens School
- Grace Orchard School
- Rainbow Centre – Margaret Drive School
- Rainbow Centre – Yishun Park School
- Lighthouse School
- St Andrew's Autism School

List of Social Service Agencies *which provide services to*

Persons with Disabilities. (This is a non-exhaustive list.)

- Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN)
- Autism Association (Singapore)
- Autism Resource Centre (Singapore)
- AWWA Ltd
- Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled
- Bizlink Centre
- Care Corner Singapore
- Canossa Mission Singapore
- Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS)
- Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home
- Christian Outreach to the Handicapped
- Down Syndrome Association (Singapore)
- Epworth Community Services
- Fei Yue Community Services
- iC2 Prephouse Ltd
- Metta Welfare Association
- Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS)
- Muscular Dystrophy Association (Singapore)
- Presbyterian Community Services
- Rainbow Centre
- Riding for the Disabled
- SHINE Children and Youth Services
- Singapore Association for the Deaf (SADeaf)
- Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH)
- Singapore Red Cross Society
- SPD
- St Andrew's Mission Hospital
- SUN-DAC
- The Singapore Cheshire Home
- Thong Kheng Welfare Services Society
- Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities Ltd
- TOUCH Community Services Ltd
- Very Special Arts