

Myth Buster

Protecting disabled children: Myths and facts

Myth	Fact
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
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.