



SOUTH EAST SENSORY IMPAIRMENT PARTNERSHIP (SESIP)

Getting There With Confidence



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The GTWC project was developed in partnership with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (GDBA), the Royal London Society for the Blind (RLSB), the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)/Mobility 21 and the Prince's Trust. They supported the Specialist Teachers for Visual Impairment (VI) and staff from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium, Kent's Specialist Teaching Service and Medway's Physical and Sensory Service. Activities were also assisted by the Kent Association for the Blind and staff from Shared Vision, Dorton House School and Dorton College for Further Education and the young people and their families.

The GTWC project was undertaken by a task group with the following membership:

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1. INTRODUCTION

The GTWC project is concerned with a person centred approach to the task of improving the independence skills of young people with VI. It acknowledges and embraces the central role that young people have in shaping the services they access.

The project was initiated in 2007-08 through SERSEN and completed under SESIP, which was established in March 2008 with the support of transitional funding from the DCSF, following the cessation of the Regional Partnerships.

The overarching priority in the work of SESIP, consistent with SERSEN's previous national lead within the Regional Partnerships, has been focused upon improving the life chances of children and young people (C&YP) with sensory impairment.

A focus on raising the self-confidence and independence of young people aged 14-19 with VI in their transition to adulthood was established for the project. The development work was undertaken by a task group comprising representatives from the GDBA, RLSB, RNIB/Mobility 21, Prince's Trust and providers of services to C&YP with VI in Kent, Medway and the Berkshire Sensory Impairment Consortium.

The project was informed by research undertaken by the GDBA concerning the functionality and the needs of blind and partially-sighted young people in the UK and by the ongoing Mobility 21 Project at the Institute of Education, University of London (ref. Section 3).

The task group was also mindful that the employment rate amongst people with VI is very low compared to the general working age population. This observation was confirmed in the recent Network 1000 Survey 2: Visually Impaired People's Access to Employment (Feb 2009)¹. The survey found that the 18-29 age group had an employment rate of 33%, whilst 22% described themselves as students. This evidence clearly reflects that young people with VI are at a heightened level of risk of being 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET).

Taking account of this background, the partners within the GTWC project set out to develop an approach to training, devised in collaboration with young people with VI, which would impact positively upon their confidence in transition to college and/or preparation for employment with the eventual aim of reducing NEET levels. More specifically, the task group established the following expected outcomes:

- i. Increased and measured expectation that young people have skills to become employed.
- ii. Eventual reduction in NEET numbers for VI in the pilot area.
- iii. Raised self-esteem and increased self-efficacy.
- iv. Raised confidence of parents.
- v. Increased possibility of accessing and enjoying leisure activities.



2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The aim of improving outcomes for C&YP and including them in the shaping of service delivery is central to the Government's Every Child Matters and Aiming High for Disabled Children programmes and the Children's Plan.

2.1 Every Child Matters: Change for Children ²

It is explicit within the Every Child Matters agenda that all C&YP, whatever their background or circumstances, should have the support they need to meet the five outcomes, namely:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

C&YP with VI need their existing independence skills identified and developed if they are to attain all of the outcomes of Every Child Matters and, in particular, to achieve economic well-being as an adult. The GTWC approach was developed to access young people's views about what aspects of independence are important for them and to shape activities that would help to address those priorities.

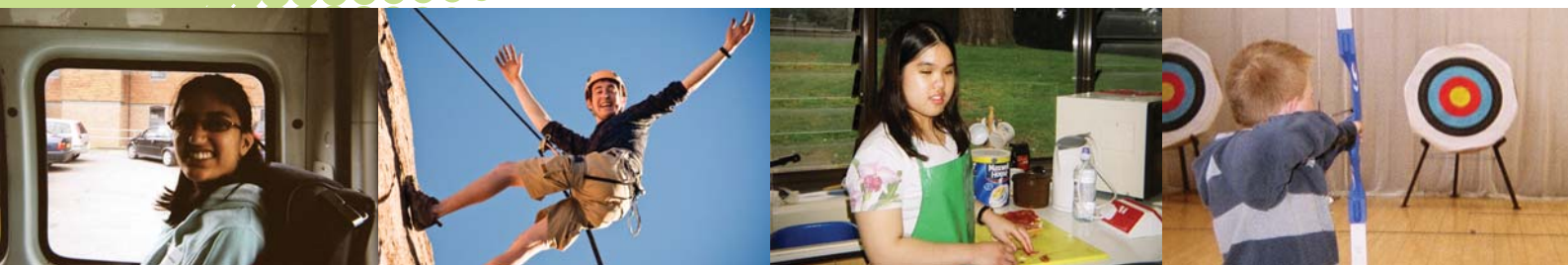
2.2 Aiming High for Disabled Children ³

The Aiming High for Disabled Children core offer emphasises that children and families should have the opportunity to plan and shape the delivery of services.

There is also a focus on developing the skills of young people for the transition to adult life, including the opportunity to be actively involved in planning for successful transition.

2.3 Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures ⁴

'Services need to be shaped by and responsive to children, young people and families, not designed around professional boundaries.' (Children's Plan p6 Executive Summary).



3. NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Coinciding with the GTWC project were two national initiatives:

3.1 Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

The GDBA has recently undertaken a survey across the UK to discover the functional skills and the needs of young people with VI ⁵. The lead GDBA researcher for the survey was actively associated with developing the GTWC activities. Families in the contributing authorities were encouraged to participate in the survey.

The questionnaire used in the GDBA research gathered the views of 147 teachers, 40 mobility officers, 378 parents and 94 C&YP across the UK. Of the C&YP who participated in the survey, 52% were registered blind, and 33% were registered partially sighted.

The GDBA offered five recommendations arising from the survey; two of these specifically related to the development of skills for independent living:

- making the provision of mobility and independent living/social skills a right for every blind or partially-sighted young person as soon as diagnosis occurs;
- expanding the range of social activities available to young people.

3.2 Mobility 21 Project ⁶

Mobility 21 is concerned with teaching C&YP with VI mobility and independent living skills. It is a joint project between the Institute of Education, University of London and RNIB. The project started in 2007 with funding for three years from the DCSF. It has been tasked with:

- setting up national standards to train people who teach mobility and independent living skills to C&YP with VI, informed by collaboration with C&YP, parents, experienced mobility practitioners working with C&YP, Heads of Services and other professionals;
- developing and running examples of courses meeting these standards;
- initiating and undertaking research that informs the teaching of mobility and independent living skills.

The Mobility 21 project's principal aim is to develop national standards and a qualification structure for those working with C&YP with VI in the field of mobility and independence.

This was felt to be necessary because of the existing incoherence and confusion apparent in current provision. It was not clear what courses were available, what their value was and the extent that they equipped practitioners to support C&YP in the development of mobility and independent living skills.

Workers in this area necessarily work in and across various life contexts with the C&YP, their carers and supporters. As a result the proposed standards and courses have to address home, educational and wider public environment contexts and the transitions between them. Mobility and independent living skills necessarily touch upon educational, health and social care dimensions.

The Mobility 21 project has adopted a 'social pedagogy' way of working in constructing the proposed standards and courses (a 'social pedagogue' is someone who works across home and education to facilitate social inclusion and independence both in educational settings and the wider community).

The Mobility 21 project has also been asked to develop a wide range of training resources. This has included filming the young people who were previously involved in the RNIB videos 'The World in their Hands' when aged 0 to 6 years of age. The Mobility 21 project has revisited the same young people, now aged 15 to 21 years of age, to focus on the development of their mobility and independence skills over time.

4. THE GTWC PROJECT

In essence, the GTWC project established and applied a methodology for gaining the views and opinions of young people and then planned and provided activities in the supporting local authority areas to address the identified needs. A summary of the GTWC approach is presented at Appendix 7.1.

4.1 Activities to gain the views of young people

The GTWC project invited groups of young people with VI, aged 14 to 19, to participate in activities and linked each of these to a session which provided the opportunity to gather information from those young people.

Young people were invited to participate in activities such as trampolining, abseiling, drama workshops and boating trips. 29 young people with VI took part in these activities.

Following refreshments young people were asked a set of open-ended questions on their thoughts and concerns regarding the skills they would need to develop as they moved towards independent adult life (ref. Appendix 7.2). With the permission of the young people and their parents/carers these comments were digitally recorded. The recordings were transcribed and then analysed to identify common themes.

The common themes and the challenges identified by the young people were used to plan future activities. The ultimate aim was to enable and support young people to plan and undertake their activities on their own initiative.

4.2 Themes identified by young people

The young people who participated in the activities clearly expressed their enjoyment of and real enthusiasm for the events in which they had participated although some level of trepidation was expressed by those involved in the abseiling activity. When questioned about what they found most appealing about the activities, many of the young people mentioned the following:

- It was fun to do.
- It was a new experience.
- It offered them the opportunity to meet new people.
- It offered them the opportunity to meet other people with the same disability.
- It offered them the opportunity to work as a team with new people.
- It made them feel 'more equal'.
- There was no need for a sighted guide.
- It was an opportunity to get out and do something.
- It expanded the limits of what they usually do.
- It was an incentive to try something new.

The comments made by the young people involved in the activities were remarkably consistent in their emphasis across different events, regardless of differences in age and experience. They were positive, optimistic and generally realistic. The activities clearly only revealed what those taking part had thought, but as they were fairly typical young people with visual needs, their comments offer potentially important insights into what such young people may feel.

The first theme apparent in the young people's comments related to their need to have **opportunities to experience 'challenge'**. Young people wanted opportunities to go beyond their current boundaries of experience and 'risk' but were also mindful of the need for these to take place in a supportive context. 'Challenge' was used in their accounts in one of two ways: to have new experiences that would test them and allow them to understand their capabilities more clearly. The second addressed the challenge of becoming independently skilled, so that they could, in the short term, for example, prepare their own hot food. For older teenagers, this took on a social aspect in that they wanted to be able to cook meals for others such as their family and friends.

The theme of 'Challenge' overlapped with the desire to **develop practical skills that would lead to greater independence** and reduce reliance on others. Across the age groups this was apparent in comments about wanting to be able to make their own hot drinks, through to being able to prepare meals. It was also apparent in comments about travel: to local shops and leisure activities, for shopping for ingredients for meals, to more general shopping and the cinema. In part these comments related to healthy lifestyles as well as a broader understanding of the need to travel independently, with travelling by train, perhaps to the nearest city or to London, being viewed as a significant adventure and opportunity to develop important independence skills.

This awareness of the need for independent living skills informed a related theme, that of **developing social independence**. The young people's comments suggested an awareness of the need to meet and make friends, sighted and VI, and to be able to engage with them in a variety of settings and contexts. The activities offered such contexts, not least by bringing people together from a number of different areas and in settings where they could support each other in making friends and having an exciting time.

It was apparent that the older members of the groups would have welcomed the opportunity to take the activity experiences further and to plan and execute their own activities. There was also an element here of the older teenagers acting as positive role models for the younger ones, opening vistas of possibilities that they might not have anticipated. Here then emerged another theme, that of young people **looking to members of their own VI community to help develop social and adventure opportunities**.

Not surprisingly a number of the comments related to **school experiences**. These acknowledged that school life offered challenges (not least in the academic sphere) but also offered opportunities to make friends and to have challenging experiences. There was awareness that these school (or university) experiences would help to prepare them for later life and work in general. In some respects the issues were very practical: "How would one go about getting a job?" or "What preparation would be needed for college?" There was a sense that they would do what they were interested in rather than have their future career circumscribed by their visual needs. This self-confidence came through in all activity settings.

Finally, it was also clear that the young people were aware that, as matters stood, there were **barriers to fulfilling their hopes** and these arose from their lack of independent living skills. There was a strong sense among all the comments of the young people about 'wanting to have a go', for some supported by peers and friends and for others on their own. All clearly valued the support of their families but wanted to go beyond this to become independent and active participants in society.

4.3 Challenges and opportunities identified by young people

The section below contains a summary of the challenges and opportunities identified by young people. (Appendix 7.3 contains a representative sample of young people's comments drawn from 40 pages of verbatim transcript).

Being Challenged

Young people wanted to have:

- the reassurance of appropriate support;
- a 'go' at things and to enjoy activities;
- the opportunity to meet challenges and gain confidence;
- a 'go', but were not aware of 'what comes next'.

Young people were aware that:

- being scared is perfectly understandable;
- they were nervous or uncomfortable when trying activities for the first time;
- new experiences were 'out there';
- it was alright to say no, but were concerned of the expectations of others.

School

Young people wanted to have:

- appropriate ICT to access the curriculum;
- support in school that encouraged independence;
- strategies to tackle work independently;
- teachers who encouraged pupils;
- appropriate electronic access to information and books;
- teachers who understood that differentiation was more than having everything in Braille.

Young people were aware of:

- the difficulties of carrying large print/Braille books and specialist equipment.

Socialising

Young people wanted to have:

- the opportunity to work with other young people in a safe environment;
- opportunities to meet with other young people with the same disability;
- opportunities to overcome their isolation.

Young people were aware of:

- the lack of a VI peer group;
- the of lack of information from facial expressions;
- the lack of appropriate strategies to start a conversation;
- the difficulties of explaining their disability to other young people;
- the need for maturity within their peers to understand the difficulties of VI.

Leaving home

Young people wanted to:

- live independently but had an awareness of the vast unknown;
- not be watched over all of the time;
- be with 'normal' people;
- have the skills to live independently.

Young people were aware of:

- the need for mobility in a new home and a new environment;
- the necessity of the right kind of support;
- the need for some help;
- the challenge of explaining their VI needs to others.

Food and cooking

Young people wanted to:

- be able to cook snacks, hot drinks and meals for themselves;
- have strategies to cook successfully and safely;
- have the right equipment;
- have sighted help to learn the strategies and techniques.

Young people were aware that:

- cooking was very challenging for many young people;
- many of them had no experience of cooking;
- some of them were frightened to try cooking;
- cooking can be trial and error;
- there was a lack of space in the family kitchen.

In summary, the underlying theme in all of the young people's comments was their concern to be challenged but informed by the knowledge that there was support available when it was needed; young people clearly expressed the desire to have the opportunities to develop their independence.

4.4 Event organised to meet the needs identified by young people

In response to the identified challenges and the underlying themes a Saturday event was planned and held at Dorton College for Further Education. (N.B. The challenges raised by the young people regarding independence in school were not specifically addressed within this event but it was recognised that they should inform the delivery of support and services to schools and the delivery of extended services).

Young people from the local authorities and organisations that had participated in the project were invited. The day was staffed by the organisations and the programme offered a range of the activities previously identified by the young people. The event ran from 10am to 8pm and included 46 young people with VI aged 13 to 25.

All of the young people were able to record the activities of the day using disposable cameras. These photographs have been given to the young people and are available for professional use, with permission, from Mobility 21. The event received excellent feedback from the young people involved. They reported that there were limited opportunities for them to engage in such a range of activities and that they would like similar types of events to be organised on a regular basis.

A poster, developed from the day event and used to promote similar activities and to publicise the success of the programme, is included at Appendix 7.4 along with a UK Vision Strategy Certificate of Merit award.

Travel

Young people reported:

- success only with short journeys in the home locality;
- that some were starting to experience bus travel;
- frustration about catching the bus (not being able to read the numbers) which prompted one young person to walk instead of catching the bus.

Young people wanted to:

- successfully travel by bus;
- have the strategies to travel by taxi;
- experience how the train system works;
- the opportunity to try longer train journeys, to boost confidence;
- have the strategies to cope when things go wrong.

Young people were aware of:

- the reliance on parents and sighted friends.

Sport

Young people wanted to:

- experience new sports;
- participate in sports where VI is not a major disadvantage;
- participate in sports with other VI young people that made them feel equal;
- do something with friends;
- join in.

Young people were aware of:

- the need to get out and do something;
- the need for a gentle push to improve self-motivation.

Programme for young people on the day

The programme (ref. Appendix 7.5) included the following events:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ■ Swimming | ■ Outdoor games | ■ Lifeskills |
| ■ Archery | ■ Shopping and cookery | ■ Careers |
| ■ Dance | ■ Communication skills | ■ Prince's Trust young entrepreneurs |
| ■ New age curling | ■ Radio workshop | |
| ■ Indoor games | ■ It's good to be me | |

The young entrepreneurs session provided an opportunity for young people with VI to meet with other young people in the 18-25 year old age group who had been assisted by the Prince's Trust to set up their own businesses. This provided an inspirational session for the young people who attended.

Activities for parents and carers

Alongside the young people's events a separate programme was provided for parents and carers which included:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Feedback from the GTWC research and activities | ■ Enabling Families seminar |
| ■ Blind in Business | ■ Afternoon tea cooked by the young people |

Feedback was offered to the parents from the young people's comments on developing independence, recorded and compiled during the initial GTWC activities (ref Appendix 7.3).

Blind in Business provided a session concerning the development of independence skills. This challenged parents regarding the importance of the support for the development of these skills in the home environment.

The session on Enabling Families (based on the Scope Strengthening Families course) was provided by a Scope trainer.

The evaluations from parents regarding this programme proved very positive.

The permission slips used to give consent for photo and video use as well as participation in the programme, are provided at Appendix 7.6.

4.5 Continuing local events

Subsequent to the initial event at Dorton College for Further Education, further activities have been developed on a smaller scale and have continued to take place in each of the contributing local authorities and organisations. These activities and events have been able to respond to local needs, particularly where the availability of transport is an issue.

Young people have been included in the planning of the activities with the aim of facilitating the development of their own planning skills and improving their level of independence. The activities are a response to the challenges identified by the young people during the project and a recognition of the need to continue the GTWC approach to shape service delivery.

New opportunities

- Aiming High for Disabled Children funding has provided group activities for C&YP with VI through short breaks during the school holidays.
- The GTWC approach is used as a model for the delivery of mobility and independence.
- Guide-Communicators have been appointed to support deafblind teenagers to enable an individual GTWC approach to develop independence skills.
- A member of the sensory support team has the responsibility for the co-ordination of independence work as part of their role.
- Partnership work with an Independent Special School for VI and a Voluntary Agency is now focused on the improvement of skills through a GTWC approach during the phase of post 14 transition to independent adult life.

- The GTWC model has been included in the Service Level Agreement with the external agency that provides mobility and independence skills for C&YP both in education and the community.
- The GTWC model is being used for developing independence skills with young people with other special educational needs.
- A sports day has been organised to enable young people from two local authorities to experience a range of new sporting activities.
- The GTWC model is being adapted for work with a younger age group with more structured support.

4.6 Revisiting the expected outcomes of the project

The following evaluative comments are offered in relation to the expected outcomes of the project set out within the Introduction (Section 1):

- i. Increased and measured expectation that young people have skills to become employed.
 - A change in the expectations of young people regarding the skills to become employed was not measured during this phase of the project.
 - As young people widen their experience and gain skills and strategies for independent living there is an increased expectation that they will have improved their skill base for future employment.
- ii. Eventual reduction in NEET numbers for VI in the pilot area.
 - As part of the project the NEET figures for young people with VI were investigated. There were difficulties in gaining coherent and accurate information on VI from the way the data is collected by agencies and this raised significant issues in addressing this outcome.
- iii. Raised self-esteem and increased self-efficacy.
 - Evaluation from young people provided by video recording and audio recording indicated an improvement in their ability to participate in activities with other young people and a positive impact on their self-esteem and self-efficacy.
- iv. Raised confidence of parents.
 - Parental feedback indicated that access to information was the key to their confidence level.
 - Parents were very positive concerning the challenges, and welcomed the opportunity to discuss strategies with young people with VI aged 24–32 who were representatives of Blind in Business.
- v. Increased possibility of accessing leisure activities.
 - Access to specialist leisure activities was provided by the project events, however, access to universal leisure activities was not recorded.

5. DISSEMINATION

The GTWC activities and information gathering provided an insight into the concerns and aspirations of young people with VI. Young people expressed a need to have opportunities to experience 'challenge', to go beyond their current boundaries of experience, but were mindful of the need for a supportive context.

Young people also expressed the need to become independently skilled, particularly in relation to preparing hot food and drinks. As part of this independence they spoke about independent travel on buses, taxis and trains and a desire to be able to shop or visit the cinema. There was a strong sense of 'wanting to have a go', for some with the support of peers and friends and for others on their own.

It is envisaged that the GTWC approach could be replicated with young people with VI in other areas of the country. Particular reference is made to the following, which may assist in the implementation of this approach:

- Summary of the GTWC approach (Appendix 7.1).
- Questions for Information Gathering (Appendix 7.2).
- The themes and challenges identified by young people (ref. 4.2 and 4.3) can be used as a basis for planning activities. (N.B. The research methodology of gathering the views of young people through recording their conversations provided secure information that eliminated interpretation by the recorder. Video recording also enabled transcription of the young people's contribution).

- Permission Forms (Appendix 7.6).
- Planning Aide-Memoire (Appendix 7.7).
- GTWC Leaflet – Young people (YP) with visual impairment talking about what builds their self-confidence (Appendix 7.8).

The GTWC approach has proved useful to a range of services not only in meeting the needs of young people but also in enabling the views of young people to be gathered for the purpose of shaping the delivery of services.

6. REFERENCES

1 **Network 1000 Survey 2: Visually Impaired People's Access to Employment – Visual Impairment Centre for Teaching and Research February 2009**

Found at:

http://www.education2.bham.ac.uk/documents/research/VICTAR/Network1000_Survey2_Employment_February2009.pdf

2 **Every Child Matters: Change for Children – DfES 2004**

Reference: DfES/1081/2004

Found at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/>

3 **Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families – HM Treasury and DCSF 2007**

Found at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/>

4 **Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures**

Found at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan/>

5 **Functionality and the Needs of Blind and Partially-Sighted Young People in the UK, Guide Dogs for the Blind: A survey of Young People, Parents, Educators and Mobility Specialists – The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association 2008**

Found at:

<http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/whatwedo/researchandgrants/socialresearch/>

6 **Mobility 21**

Briefing paper and course details for Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight can be found at:

<http://www.miseuk.org/news.htm>

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 7.1: Summary of the Getting There With Confidence approach

Planning the initial activity and information gathering

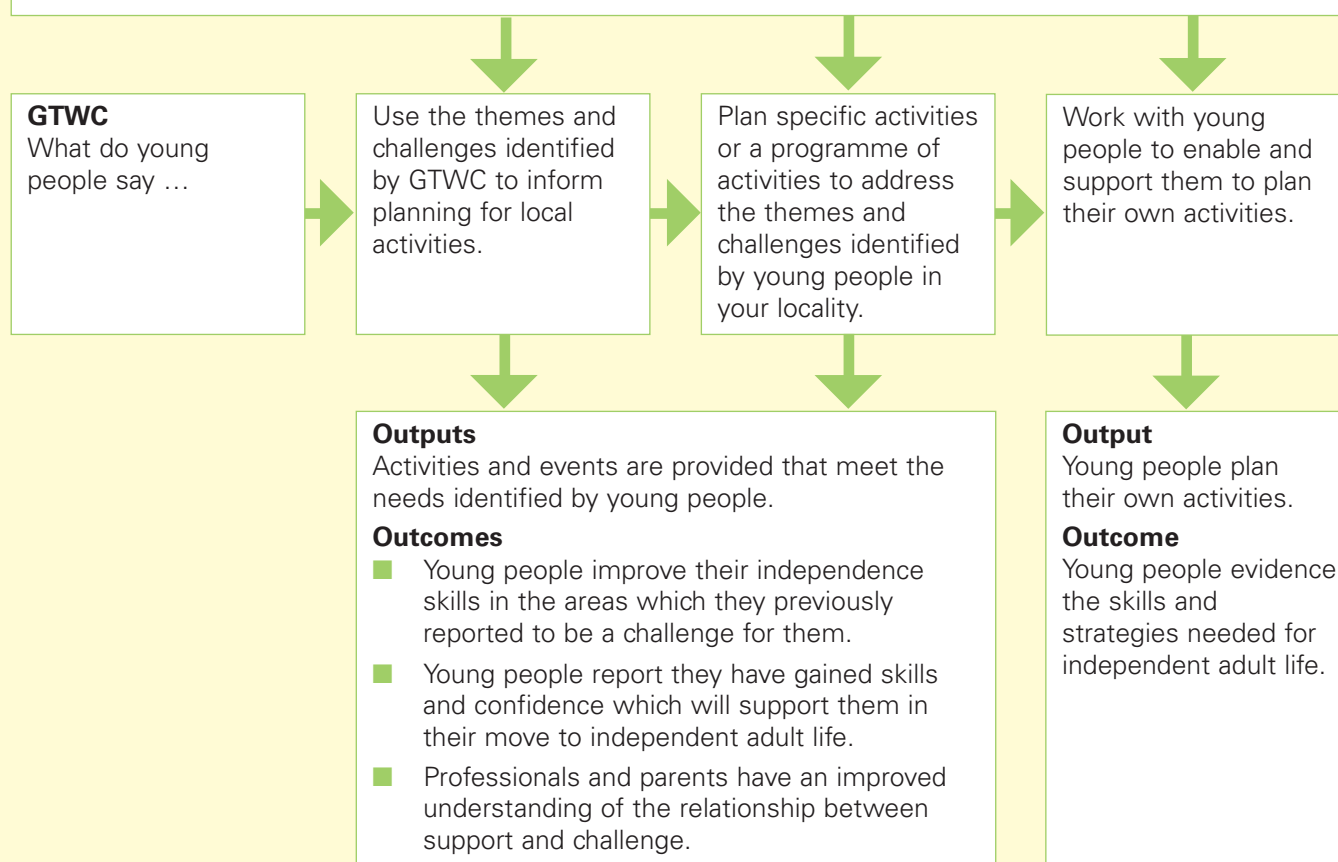
- Plan an activity and encourage participation from young people with visual impairment and their parents/carers.
- Update and complete a risk assessment, issue and retain activity permission slips and audio/video recording permissions – ensure they are signed.
- Plan appropriate support for the activities and refreshments.
- Plan questions for the information gathering or use questions sheet provided.

Activity and information gathering

- Invite young people.
- Have a fun activity with the young people.
- Undertake the information gathering, preferably independent of parental input.
- Record discussions.

Analyse and plan

- Transcribe the audio recording.
- Analyse the transcript to identify the challenges for young people in your locality.



Appendix 7.2: Questions for Information Gathering

Getting There With Confidence: Focus Group Topic Guide

INTERVIEWER:

What do you think about today's activities?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- What did you enjoy?
- What had been new for you?
- What had you found difficult?
- How did you overcome the difficulties (perhaps they did not!)?
- Who had you worked with?
- How had working with others turned out?
- Were there any issues?

INTERVIEWER:

How do you feel about today's activities?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- How did you feel today?
- Why was that?
- Did other people recognise how you felt?
- How did they express that to you?

INTERVIEWER:

Today was a bit different to what you normally do – how did you feel today?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- When you have other new experiences, like those you had today, how do you feel?
- What do you enjoy in new experiences?
- What is difficult for you in new experiences?
- When you have new experiences do others recognise how you feel about them?

INTERVIEWER:

What sort of things do you enjoy doing most?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- What sort of things do you enjoy doing most?
- Who do you like doing activities with?
- What sorts of things are difficult for you?
- How could you make the difficult things easier? (or do other people have to do things for you to make things easier?)

INTERVIEWER:

When you are at school what do you like doing most?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- What is difficult at school?
- Why is that?

INTERVIEWER:

You are all going to be leaving school at some point in the future!

What would you enjoy doing when you finish school?

Prompts to direct the conversation:

- How do you feel about leaving school?
- How do feel about getting a job or doing more studying?
- What will be easy for you?
- What will be difficult for you?

Further open-ended questions may be used to gather information regarding the specific issues raised by the young people on the development of independence skills.

Close with a 'Thank you' for talking to the interviewer!

Appendix 7.3: What young people say...

The following selection of representative quotes were drawn from the original transcripts (which totalled 40 pages) and were compiled by Dr Karl Wall, (Mobility 21 Project), as a presentation for parents of the challenges identified by young people with VI.

INT = Interviewer. S1, C, D1, B, S, J, D2 are some of the young people interviewed.

The challenges: 1. BEING CHALLENGED

Quotes 1

INT: Right. So what are some of the things that you might enjoy in new experiences?

- B: In this case (...trampolining), it's the feeling of just being able to bounce around and have a laugh.
- D2: New experiences, I think, new ground really. If visually impaired people feel they can try something new, then it gives them ideas to try other new things.
- B: So it's kind of like a progression, so once you start doing one new thing ...
- D2: You think, why can't I do something else?
- B: Yeah, I see what you mean.
- D2: It's an incentive to try more new things.

Quotes 2

INT: Right. What do you think are some of the difficulties that you have in new experiences? Are there situations where you've tried new things, and you've found them difficult?

B: It's a different case whether you want to do it, or whether you're being forced. When I went to Thorpe once, with my mate from school, we went, and I actually chickened out on Stealth, I was so scared that I didn't actually want to go on it first. And then later, my mate managed to drag me on it, so sometimes you have to be forced slightly, just given that gentle push, just to go onto it, and do it.

Quotes 3

INT: Right. When you have new experiences, when you do new things, do you think other people recognise how you feel about them?

S: Sometimes yes, and sometimes no. Because sometimes there's peer pressure when you experience new things, and you're a bit frightened, as B was saying, because he chickened out, but then his friend forced him onto the ride, because it's, as I said, it's like peer pressure.

B: Sometimes it's peer pressure, sometimes it's your own will to 'I want to do this', not 'oh my God I'm scared', and then the other person trying to help you on to do it.

Quotes 4

INT2: This is a three-masted, ocean-going ship [Sailing with the Jubilee Sailing Trust]

D1: You go sailing on this ship. You're given a buddy, so you've got someone to help you, who you are bunked with, so he's on the top bunk or the bottom bunk, and you're with them. What you're expected to do is, work the ship, so they'll have you hauling on ropes, they'll have you all steering the ship, and one day, they will have you on mess duty, which basically means preparing the meals, and packing away the stuff once it's done, laying the table, putting stuff in the dishwasher. Unfortunately, you're not allowed to cook, because Cook's territory is holy ground. Only Cook's allowed in there.

Quotes 5

S1: Yes, I'd say that is because I've done abseiling including these times, I've done it twice here, so I've done it seven times. The first time I did it was four years ago at B....., and two years ago I did it at P.....

INT: So you've done it before, S1?

S1: Yes.

INT: But you were still very nervous that first time up there?

S1: I was scared, but since I hadn't done it for a long time, that's perfectly understandable.

Quotes 6

C: I've done it before (abseiling), I've gone up and come back down the same way, so I felt a bit more confident than I possibly would have done the first time, but I'm really not comfortable with abseiling!

INT: So, you're not comfortable, but you're now a bit more confident that you can actually do the challenge you set

C: Yep.

INT: So how do you feel if you are offered other challenging things to do that you may not have done before? Do you think you'd have a go, or not have a go? A?

A: I think I'd have a go.

Quotes 7

S1: Yes, I mean, I would do that sort of thing. I mean, when I was at P....., I hadn't done camp craft, and we tried it and it was quite interesting, and I also liked it when we were sitting round a camp fire, because it was a new experience, but I think that if I was offered the chance, I would take it, to do something new.

INT: But sometimes if something is new, I get very anxious inside.

S1: Yes, not knowing what's coming next...

Quotes 8

INT: That's OK. And did you feel confident to tell someone you didn't feel comfortable?

C: Yes. I think I would if, for example, if I was asked to do something, and I asked what was going to happen, and if I wasn't so sure about it, I would say, well, I'm not so sure about this so, if it's alright, I won't do it.

INT: C do you feel happy about telling somebody when you're not happy about doing something?

C: I do to an extent, but you have to think about the fact that they've made the effort to offer this to you, so you have to show your appreciation for it, but it depends on what it is, like S1 (another young person) said, so if it's something that you're definitely not comfortable with, then you have to politely tell them that you're definitely not comfortable with doing it.

Quotes 9

INT: Because sometimes, people say no, and actually it turns out quite reasonable. So there might have been people who didn't fancy coming today, but actually might have enjoyed it once they were here.

S1: Yes, I mean, people say no, but actually, when you start to think about it, you actually realise that it could be rather fun. For example, if we did a barn dance – which we're not going to do – and someone said no, and you start to think about it, you just realise that you would actually enjoy it, and you'd give it a go.

2. SCHOOL

Quotes 1

INT: S1, what do you find difficult at school – it could be anything, not just a subject.

S1: Well, you know what I find difficult – French, because I don't really like reading the vocabulary for French, and the Braille code – it's not hard, it's just I don't like reading vocabulary, and I often forget my French. But I'm starting to like it now because the teacher, unlike the previous teacher, actually gives a bit more encouragement, whereas the previous teacher was a bit more enthusiastic.

INT: So it depends a bit on the teacher, does it, sometimes?

S1: Yes.

Quotes 2

B: It's even worse, because all the homeworks are like, three subjects that I have to do in Braille, and the rest I have to do on the computer, which is French, music and Spanish – actually, no, and a fourth, maths. Now maths, oh God! I don't want to know how much my head hurts after I've done a homework on maths. I'm like, 'oh, will this ever end?', because we just seem to get so much, but the teacher I've started to hate a lot now is my history teacher, because he gives you essays every few weeks, and I'm like, can't you just lighten the workload a bit?' and he's like – he would probably tell me this exactly the same, he's _____ (name of nationality), he'll probably go, 'no, I won't lighten the workload, you just have to cope'.

Quotes 3

B: That's not what I get. I have to have all my textbooks in Braille. And you think large print's bad – I'll just give you an example, not a textbook but you know the new Harry Potter? That comes in 11 Braille volumes and the boxes – one box is about that high and about that long, to accommodate, say, five volumes, five or six volumes, any my textbooks are about that. And my laptop, it has loads of bits and pieces in it, and I have a proper bag, that I've got my homework folder in, and the laptop, so if only they would put the textbooks on the laptop, it would make my life so much easier.

3. SOCIALISING

Quotes 1

INT: Could I take it a bit further and just ask people if there's anything that you find difficult outside of school, or what you enjoy most outside of school. B said he really enjoys doing his football team. Is there anything that you really find particularly good, or particularly difficult? I know S you find not being able to ...

S1: Socialise, yes, that's because with blind and partially sighted people, it's not really easy to socialise, because you have to catch their eye, so that they can come over, but when you can't see, that's not so easy.

INT: So you find it difficult to start up a conversation with people.

S1: Yes.

Quotes 2

INT: Right. And how was that for you, working with other people?

B: That was fine. I'm used to working with other people. I go to a drama group every week, and that's where I've kind of learned to be friendly and work with other people, in a safe environment.

Quotes 3

INT: Anyone else any other comments on how they felt about today, about the activity?

D1: Only that it was really good to get to meet new people with the same sort of disability as S and I have. I knew B quite well, but I didn't know A too well, I didn't know the other D; I'm sorry we didn't get more of a chance to talk. But it's great fun for people with the same sort of disabilities to get together. It's easy to start thinking that you're the only disabled person with this particular problem.

B: I hadn't seen D2 in a few months. I saw him at (name of holiday resort) when we went on this holiday thing, and we kind of reunited, because we knew each other a bit before. And then we met there, and now we've been able to catch up, so it's quite good for both of us to be able to catch up.

Quotes 4

INT: And you were telling me, D1, earlier, some of the work that you'd done with your housemates, in getting them to understand some of the difficulties you faced, and what might help. That's something you're continuing to work on, is it?

D1: It's tricky, because, I think the truth is, they're still not mature enough to understand exactly how important it is to get down all the information they can get. You know, I asked if they had any questions, and they hadn't any, and they still haven't come back to ask me more. I think that what they didn't quite realise, and I should have really emphasised to them was that, doing an hour's work of them making a ham sandwich, and having problems because I deliberately made them problems, is scratching the surface, and I've hardly taught them anything. I think maybe if I'd have enforced that more, they'd have asked me more.

4. LEAVING HOME

Quotes 1

INT: Say if we took out what course it was, and talked about actually moving away from home and living independently – what sort of things do you think might be a challenge for you there?

C: I don't think I would mind living on my own, having my own house or apartment, whatever it might be, but I think mobility from that apartment or location might be difficult – depends what the transport links are like, and I think that would have to be a big consideration when choosing a place to live – what are the transport links like around it. I think maybe living in the country, for example, there's basically no transport links.

....Like, when we were driving through the countryside to here ... Admiring the view and everything ... We were saying you wouldn't be able to just pop to the shops, so I think transport links are an important consideration when choosing a location..

Quotes 2

INT: So you think the money side of going on to college or studying might be difficult for you?

B: I think having the right kind of support. There's support, and then there's the right kind of support, like friendly support, support from other people. I'm not trying to say that support assistants in school are not as good as they could be. They are very good, in the way they treat you, but sometimes they can be slightly too 'oh, you've got to be independent. Go out and do what you want to,' and it does get rather annoying after a while. I'm thinking that once I've got through school, I'll be alright, because university is full of normal people, well not normal people – I mean, there are no higher authority figures, as it were, like people watching over you, watching your every move, so I think that'll help.

D2: Yes, but you've got to realise that means there's no help, there's no-one to fall back on.

Quotes 3

INT2: D1, you're at the top end of our age range for this project. You've already left school and are at university. What things did you find difficult?

D1: The biggest problem I had at university was getting used to shared accommodation again, after a gap year of living on my own. And the fact that not everyone is going to sympathise with the problems that you have, even those who share your disability. Getting support, as B says, was also a little bit tricky, because I had to try and find students who would work with me. That's still a serious problem now, as it happens. And getting your LSAs to understand what your problems are, because while my LSA was away for two weeks, I had two LSAs. One LSA for each of those two weeks, neither of whom knew me, and neither of them had been told what I needed, and I had to tell them all over again.

B: That was very bad.

5. FOOD AND COOKING

Quotes 1

INT: So, if we're looking at being independent on leaving school, how many folks are confident about cooking their own meals? C, do you feel confident about that?

C: It's not a problem, yeah. It's a challenge. I mean, I admittedly quite like certain challenges, but I think that would be one that I'd quite enjoy. I've never really cooked before at all. I think that'd be frightening just to try.

INT: So you're not trying it now?

C: Er, I considered trying it, but I haven't yet. (Laughter)

Quotes 2

S1: I am actually thinking of cooking my own meals, because Mrs B, one of my dinner ladies, said that, after I've made all of my own desserts, which I won't go into now, we can start cooking more things, such as doing something like chicken. And I was saying that ...

INT: So, S1, how do you feel about doing cooking for yourself

S1: Well, basically, the problem with this is that again, it's trial and error.

Quotes 3

INT: Well, what do you find difficult?

S1: Well, the thing about cooking at home is that we've got such a small kitchen, and so little space, and you need the right equipment at the right time in the right place, when you need to cook.

INT: So, it's equipment, and what else?

S1: Space.

INT: And what else? Could you independently cook something if you had equipment and space?

S1: No. Well, you could, but ... no, you can't. You need basically a recipe and you might need a little bit of sighted help.

Quotes 4

INT2: ... is there anything else that you might be interested in?

S: Cooking.

INT2: So is that cooking for yourself, or actually thinking about being independent with your cooking?

S: Cooking for myself, and cooking for other people.

D1: And now that S's said that, I think I'd like that as well. Certainly cooking for other people. I can cook for myself OK, but I'd have problems doing it for somebody else.

6. TRAVEL

Quotes 1

INT: So how much independent travel do people do at home? A, do you go out and go anywhere on your own when you're at home? ...B?

B: I go to the shop, and up my auntie's.

INT: So you do short journeys?

B's TA: The day before yesterday, you went home on the bus on your own, from school.

B: Yeah.

INT: Was that the first independent bus travel?

B: No, I've had a few.

Quotes 2

INT: C, how much independent travel do you do?

C: I prefer to walk everywhere I go. It's not that I'm not comfortable with the buses, but if I can walk there, then I prefer to do that. I walk to (Town) and (Town), to the shops, to my Nan's house. Admittedly, I could do more, but ...

INT: I gathered you are a bit uncomfortable with the buses?

C: Yeah.

INT: So what is it that makes you uncomfortable with them?

C: Er, I think mainly it would probably be the hustle and bustle, especially in the P..... Centre, for example, it's quite busy. If I knew where I was going and the exact bus I had to catch, it'd be OK, but if I prefer one day just to take the bus home, I might get slightly frustrated, but as I said, I prefer to walk everywhere rather than catch the bus.

INT: So that's your strategy for dealing with it?

C: Yeah.

INT: What if it was a longer journey?

C: I would possibly ask one of my parents to take me.

INT: Have you tried any train travel at all?

C: Yes, I've been on the train with my friends, like when we go to (Out of town shopping centre), to the cinema sometimes. I think it's because I know I'm with other people, and I feel more confident that they're fully sighted, so ...

INT: And you don't have to make any decisions.

C: Yep.

Quotes 3

INT: J, do you do any independent travel?

J: Erm, going to the chip shop and to Tesco's.

INT: And you're comfortable with those routes?

J: Yeah, they're just down the road.

INT: And have you ever caught the bus anywhere?

J: Yeah, I will go on the bus, to (Town) ...

INT: Is that on your own or with friends?

J: With my mum and with my dad.

Quotes 4

INT: ... Have you got an idea(...about confidence boosting activities), S1?

S1: Yes. I was thinking that it might be good to try the idea of going up to London on public transport. I don't know about you but it would boost my confidence, because I'll be able to understand how the system works, and how you can do it properly. I've done a bit of bus travel, and a bit of train travel, but not much, in terms of mobility.

INT: So you want to do something around travelling

S1: Yes.

Quotes 5

INT2: Does it always run that smoothly? What happened the last time you caught a train?

D1: I was about to say that. No. The last time it happened, after a lot of trouble with the taxi-card system, where the company who had already got me rang up to say, sorry we can't actually take you, we're going to put you through to another taxi company. So they put me through to another company. At that moment, my phone's network went dead. So I spent some time sorting that out. When I finally got onto the train, I had already told Assistance I was going to Southampton Parkway, and was meeting some people there. Assistance decided I was getting out at Southampton Central instead.

So when the train stopped in front of Southampton Parkway, the door opened for about 30 seconds, and I didn't have time to get off, but even if I had, I'd have got lost, because there was no-one there waiting for me. Then the doors closed and off shot the train again.

So I sat there all the way to Southampton Central, muttering under my breath, found Assistance, told them exactly what I thought of them, and asked them if I could get a train going back the other way. They rang Dad. He rang the company who were picking me up, and they said, oh stay where you are, we'll come and get you.

Unfortunately... by the time Dad got back to me with that message, I was on a train... going back the other way.

7. SPORT

Quotes 1

D2: I think the good thing about trampolining is that people with sight problems really have no disadvantage to anyone with full sight, when it comes to trampolining.

INT: So how does that make you feel?

D2: It makes me feel more equal, I think.


Quotes 2

B: I know what you mean (...about trampolining). I'd say that as well, because when I do things like football, I'm always having to run around with a guide person, when I do it, and then all the others who can even see a little bit are able to run around and kick it. With trampolining, there's no real competition, as such, and normal practice. It's either free bounce, or you're trying to learn a new routine and get it all together. You've basically got two options, and with both of those you feel really equal.

S: If I may intervene, I think that I like doing this kind of thing because you're actually getting out and doing something, because it means that you're not sitting around doing nothing all day.

Appendix 7.4: GTWC Poster and UK Vision Strategy Certificate of Merit

Catch The Vision ... Skills For Life




Sight Impaired Teenagers want: ♦ Challenges
♦ Opportunities
♦ Support
♦ Independence


How will your organisation respond?

Getting There With Confidence ... Let's Do It!


socialising




Cooking




Education



Sport



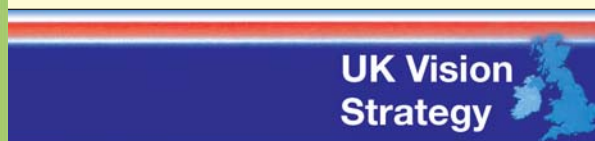
Travelling



Photographs of young people with visual impairment taken by young people with visual impairment

Getting There With Confidence is a South East Sensory Impairment Partnership project; supported by The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and The Prince's Trust. The project is facilitated by professionals from the Berkshire Sensory Consortium, Medway Physical and Sensory Service, Kent Specialist Teaching Service and The RLSB.

GTWC Poster



GTWC Certificate

UK Vision Strategy Certificate of merit

Vision UK 2009 conference

4 June 2009

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London

Poster competition

Highly commended

Lesley-Alexander

Lesley-Anne Alexander
Chair
UK Vision Strategy
Strategic Advisory Group

Nick Astbury

Nick Astbury
Chair
VISION 2020 UK

Appendix 7.5: Activity Day Programme

Getting There With Confidence 29/03/08 A C T I V I T I E S					
10.45 – 11.30	11.30 – 12.15	12.15 – 1.00	1.00 – 2.00	2.00 – 3.00	3.00 – 4.00
Radio	Radio	Radio	L U N C H	Swimming	Swimming
Shopping & Cooking (School)	Shopping & Cooking (School)	Shopping & Cooking (School)		Dance (College)	Dance (College)
Archery (School)	Archery (School)	Archery (School)		Archery (School)	Archery (School)
Outdoor/Inside Football (School)	Outdoor/Inside Football (School)	Outdoor/Inside Football (School)		Curling (School)	Curling (School)
Its Good to be Me (College) Girls	Its Good to be Me (College) Boys	Dance (College)		Indoor/Outside (College)	Indoor/Outside (College)
Communication Skills (College)	Communication Skills (College)	Communication Skills (College)		Lifeskills (College)	Lifeskills (College)
Outdoor Games (College)	Outdoor Games (College)	Outdoor Games (College)		Cookery (School)	Cookery (School)
How to be an Entrepreneur	How to be an Entrepreneur	How to be an Entrepreneur		Careers (College)	Careers (College)

Registration 10.00 -10.45

A C T I V I T I E S F O R P A R E N T S			
10.30 – 11.30	11.30 – 1.00	1.00 – 2.00	2.00 – 4.00
Getting There With Confidence feedback Dr Karl Wall	Blind in Business	L U N C H	Enabling Families; Developing self-esteem Ian Townsend

Appendix 7.6: Permission Forms

PERMISSION FORM

including audio recording,
photos and film permission

Getting There With Confidence

Name of organiser:

Date:

List of participating organisations:

Time:

Location:

Personal details

Young person's name	
Date of birth	
For those under 16 years Name of parent/carers	
Home address	
Home telephone number	
E-mail address	
Parents/carers emergency phone number	

Medical details

(This information is confidential to this activity and will not be retained as named information after the event).

Details of visual impairment/ level of vision (if any)	
Additional disabilities or access issues	
Medical needs/medication/ food allergies	
Personal Health Care Needs Or:	

During the activity individual assistance with personal health care needs remains the responsibility of parents or carers.

Return address for forms:

**INDIVIDUAL OR PARENTAL
CONSENT**
**For young people under the age
of 16 years:**

Getting There With Confidence

I give consent for the young person in my care to take part in the activities outlined in the Getting There With Confidence programme.

I give consent for the young person in my care to have their image or voice recorded by video, photograph or audio recording in order:

- to provide a record of the day's activities
- to inform the planning of future events
- to inform research into the development of independence for young people with visual impairment
- to be used in educational and training materials
- to be used for promotional purposes

I understand that the copyright of the images/footage shall be retained by the organiser of the Getting There With Confidence activity; there is no limit on the period of time during which they may be used and they may be shown without the person being named, in public places.

I give consent for the young person in my care to travel in the vehicles used by the organisers of the Getting There With Confidence activity or specially hired vehicles as required by the activities.

I agree to ensure that the young person in my care understands that while he/she attends this course they must follow the instructions of the staff at all times, and behave with care and consideration at all times.

Name of young person: _____

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

INDIVIDUAL OR PARENTAL CONSENT

For young people over the age of
16 years:

Getting There With Confidence

I give my consent to take part in the activities outlined in the Getting There With Confidence programme.

I give my consent to have my image or voice recorded by video, photograph or audio recording in order:

- to provide a record of the day's activities
- to inform the planning of future events
- to inform research into the development of independence for young people with visual impairment
- be used in educational and training materials
- to be used for promotional purposes

I understand that the copyright of the images/footage shall be retained by the organisers of the Getting There With Confidence activity; there is no limit on the period of time during which they may be used and may be shown without the person being named, in public places.

I consent to travelling in vehicles used by the organisers of the Getting There With Confidence activity or specially hired vehicles as required by the activities.

I agree to follow the instructions of the staff at all times, and behave with care and consideration at all times.

Signature of young person: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

**INDIVIDUAL OR PARENTAL
CONSENT**
**For parents, carers and adult
helpers:**

Getting There With Confidence

I am aware that the young people's activities will be recorded by video, photographs or audio recording in order:

- to provide a record of the day's activities
- to inform the planning of future events
- to inform research into the development of independence for young people with visual impairment
- be used in educational and training materials
- to be used for promotional purposes

I consent to the use of images and recording, in which I may appear, for the purposes outlined above. I note that I will not be named in any such materials.

I understand that the copyright of the images/footage shall be retained by the organisers of the Getting There With Confidence activity and that there is no limit on the period of time during which they may be used and may be shown without my being named, in public places.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 7.7: Planning Aide-Memoire

Activity planned	Target group	Funding	Aim
Venue	Specialist providers	Dates and times	Contact information
Planning group – lead person	3 months before	2 months before	1 month before
Letter YP/parents	Permission slip	Specialist equipment	YP involvement
How CYP are prioritised	Method of contact	Contact time i.e. 4 weeks before	Parents involvement
Transport – mode	Provider	Costs	Return journey
Support required	Costs	CRB checks	Information to providers
Risk assessment	Health and Safety	Mobility	Toileting
Countdown activities 3 weeks before	2 weeks before	1 week before	1 day before
Feedback during the event	Evaluation of the event from participants	Feedback from parents	Feedback from supporters
Thoughts from organisers immediately after event	What were the main learning points	How could the event be improved	Future developments

Young people (YP) with visual impairment talking about what builds their self-confidence.

What young people say...

Start here

Getting there with confidence

The importance of being challenged

Q: So how do you feel if you are offered challenging things to do?

YP: I think I'd have a go.

YP: I think that if I was offered the chance, I would take it, to do something new.

Q: What about telling somebody when you're not happy about doing something?

YP: ...then you have to politely tell them that you're definitely not comfortable with doing it.

YP: ...well, I'm not so sure about this so, if it's alright, I won't do it...

Education

Being educated can be challenging

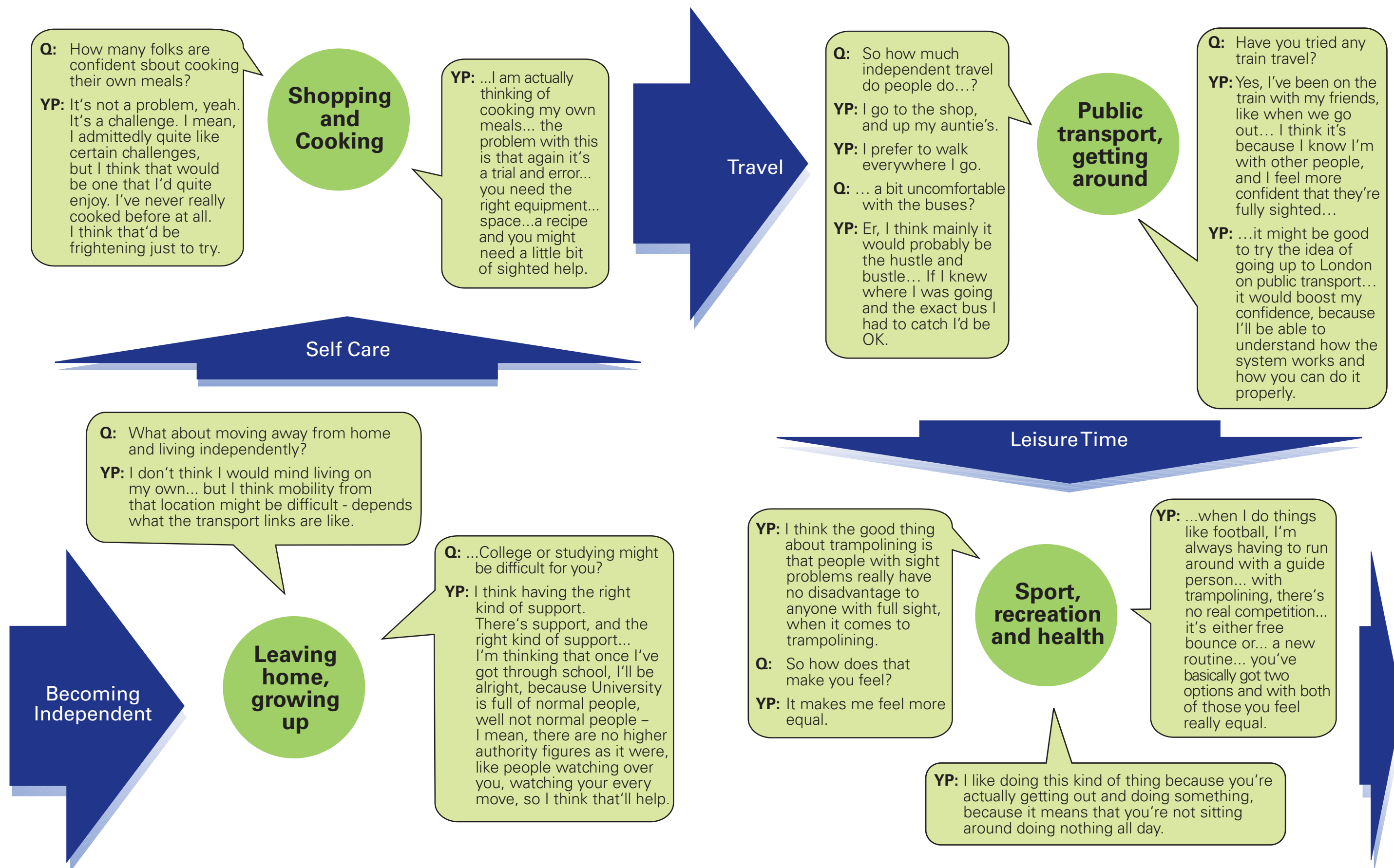
YP: I'm starting to like it now because the teacher...gives a bit more encouragement

Q: So it depends a bit on the teacher, does it, sometimes?

YP: Yes.

Q: What do you find difficult at school?

YP: Homework... three subjects that I have to do in Braille and the rest I have to do on the computer. I'm like, 'oh, will this never end'... I'm like, can't you just lighten the workload...?



Let's Do It!

YP 1: If visually impaired people feel they can try something new, then it gives them ideas to try other new things.

YP 2: So it's kind of like a progression, so once you start doing a new thing...

YP 1: You think, why can't I do something else?

YP 2: Yeah, I see what you mean.

YP 1: It's an incentive to try new things.

CONTACT DETAILS

Add the details for your Sensory Service

Getting there with confidence

Q: YP:...with blind and partially sighted people, it's not really easy to socialise, because you have to catch their eye... but when you can't see, that's not so easy.

Q: So you find it difficult to start up a conversation with people.

YP: Yes... I go to a drama group every week, and that's where I've kind of learned to be friendly and work with other people, in a safe environment.

Becoming Independent

Meeting other people

YP: It was really good to get to meet new people with the same sort of disability. It's easy to start thinking that you're the only disabled person with this particular problem.