



{inclusion outreach}

1031 Lucas Avenue
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www.inclusionoutreach.ca

Manual Wheelchair Mobility

Students who move their own wheelchairs are learning to propel, change direction, regulate speed, as well as manage slightly inclined surfaces. They are also learning important safety steps such as stopping and applying brakes. Learning these skills in the context of everyday school routines is more meaningful, than learning it in isolation and is therefore usually more successful. Plan the day so that the student is getting from one area of the school to another to do something at the destination rather than the wheelchair skills being the activity itself. At times it may be slower to get from point A to point B in the chair, but there is rich learning that the student is developing when they are propelling on their own power rather than being pushed. If a student is not independently propelling yet, provide as much support as is required for the student to be successful.



Respect

Competence

Inclusion

Presence

Choice



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Ideas for Developing Manual Wheelchair Skills

Some suggestions for helping students work on moving their own wheelchairs are:

- Start in a more open area like the gym or courtyard to increase success. At this stage movement in any direction is acceptable. The student is developing the concept of cause and effect when they push the wheel and the chair moves.
- Practice starting and stopping. Playing a game of Red Light, Green Light with classmates at recess or PE can make this fun and inclusive.
- You can work on increasing control by narrowing the space (following a line on the gym floor during warm up time, moving down a hallway to deliver newsletters)
- As you make your way through a route, talk about right, left and other directional concepts.
- Make an obstacle course using pylons, chairs, skipping ropes etc. to practice turning and steering.
- Use verbal prompts to cue applying the brakes before transfers out of the wheelchair. These prompts can be faded over time.

More detailed resources can be found at Sunny Hill Health Centre's website:

www.seatingandmobility.ca