

Door Safety



The Queensmill Trust



This leaflet provides advice on how you can help keep your child with disabilities safe around doors.

This leaflet was compiled by the Hammersmith and Fulham Disabled Children's Team Occupational Therapists following a collaborative parent workshop with the Queensmill Trust Occupational Therapy team. The leaflet is shared here with their permission and is relevant to families living in any local authority unless specified with a *.

Because children with disabilities may have little awareness of danger they may abscond from home or access rooms where they could be in danger, for example, the kitchen and bathroom.

General considerations:

- Before fitting any extra locks, fire safety should be taken into consideration. The Fire Brigade is able to carry out a free home safety check (www.london-fire.gov.uk).
- In Hammersmith & Fulham, the Safer Homes Scheme* can provide a home safety check if you have a child with a disability (www.creightonhouse.org/safer-homes-children)
- If doors are locked with keys it is important that the keys can be found quickly in the event of an emergency. Also consider using the same key for different locks.
- Less expensive, lower cost options should be tried before considering more costly options
- Alterations should be necessary and appropriate and should not present an increased risk to the child and or other family members. For example, consider risks of child or other family members being locked in accidentally, emergency access and restraint issues. These risks can be reduced by choosing appropriate locks (eg thumb turn locks).
- Benefits such as DLA are provided to meet additional costs of a person with a disability and can be used to fund some safety items available on the high street.
- When buying equipment for people with a disability, it should be VAT exempt.
- You should check your rental contract to ensure you are not breaching it and request landlord permission if necessary.
- Consider putting "Stop" signs on doors if appropriate and discuss using social stories / symbols and other techniques with child's school to teach child appropriate alternative behaviours.

Examples of possible solutions:

- **Slide bolts** These can be suitable for younger children if positioned out of their reach or for children that do not have the capacity to undo them.
- **Key locks.** These can be easiest way of securing doors however requires family members to carry keys at all times, there is a risk of people being locked in accidentally, accessing keys in an emergency so their use should be considered carefully.
- **Thumb turn locks.** These locks are locked using a key from the outside but can be opened from the inside using a thumb turn. This ensures that no one can be accidentally locked in.

- **Door opener restrictors:** These restrict the amount a door can be opened.
- **Key safe or key cabinet:** Key safes can be fitted internally or externally to ensure that keys can be located quickly in the event of an emergency and to prevent access to keys by children. They are usually operated with a code so need to be sure that child does not see code being entered. Key cabinets do a similar job but can hold more and larger keys.
- **Key pad door locks:** These ensure that only people with the security code can open the door and can prevent a child from leaving the house. Again need to ensure that child does not see code being entered but can be useful for siblings so they do not have to carry keys.
- **Stable doors:** This is where the top and bottom parts of the door open separately so the bottom part can be locked while the top is open to enable the child and parent to see each other in adjoining rooms while keeping the child safe.
- **Doors with a visual panel or spy holes:** Enable the child to be seen without disturbing them. The spy hole should have 180° viewing range.
- **Sensors or alarms:** Can be fitted to doors to alert when a child has entered an area or opened a door. Sensors can be linked to a range of alerts – different sounds, volumes, pagers or vibrations, mobile phones.

Examples of suppliers:

Door wedges, slide bolts, door chains, cupboard locks, internal and external door locks:

- Niche Locks, www.nichelocks.com 01922 473 199
- DIY outlets, for example Homebase, B&Q, Wickes
- Lock shop Warehouse, <http://www.lockshop-warehouse.co.uk>

Door restrictors:

- Jackloc, www.jackloc.com 01530 249 034
- Hardward Outlet, <https://hardwareoutletuk.com>

Key safe or key cabinet:

- The Safe Shop, www.thesafeshop.co.uk 0800 432 0722
- Barriers Direct, www.barriersdirect.co.uk – see Keytronic Fire Safe Key Cabinet.
- The Key Safe Company, www.keysafe.co.uk

Sensors or Alarms:

- Maplin, www.maplin.co.uk 020 8686 6081
- Frequency Precision, www.frequencyprecision.com 01837 810 590
- Ultra Secure Direct, <https://www.ultrasecuredirect.com>
- Sensorium, www.sensorium.co.uk 0800 056 5454

Pressure Mat and Pager Systems:

- Easy Link UK, www.easylinkuk.co.uk 01536 264 869
- Ridley Electronics UK, www.ridleyelect.co.uk 01722 717 878

Portable Door Locks

There are some travel door locks available that may be suitable if on holiday.

- <https://www.corporatetravelsafety.com/safety-tips/portable-door-locks-for-travel/>

The lists of companies provided in these information leaflets are not approved lists. Hammersmith & Fulham Children & Family Services accept no liability with regard to any purchases from the companies listed. The list of companies provided is not exhaustive.

**relevant to Hammersmith and Fulham residents only*