

Devon Libraries

Resources for children with little or no sight

Factsheet 24

The resources listed below are available through Devon Libraries. Staff in your local library will be happy to order any items that are not held in stock.

Large Print Books

Large print story books are aimed at a wide age range. They are available in all libraries, although the main collection is housed at Exeter Central Children's Library. They can be borrowed free of charge at any Devon library.

Touch & Feel Books

Many libraries have small numbers of these in the picture book area of the children's section.

Braille Books

We have approximately 20 Braille picture books, held on subscription from the Clearvision Project in London, which can be requested through all libraries. They have a transparent Braille insert so that adults can read the story and the children can follow it in Braille.

Computers

All Devon libraries have Dolphin Super Nova software, which can magnify text up to 32 times and has speech facilities. Libraries are also equipped with Widgit 'Writing with Symbols' software, which turns text into symbols and which is used and understood by many people with learning and communication difficulties. This also has speech software.

The following libraries have computers which have been specially adapted for use by people with learning, sensory or movement disabilities: Barnstaple, Bideford, Crediton, Dartmouth, Exeter, Exmouth, Kingsbridge, Newton Abbot, Tavistock and Tiverton. Each of these PC+ computers has an adapted keyboard, a large trackerball mouse which can be used with hands or feet, screen magnification and a speech facility. The computers sit on adjustable tables which give room for wheelchairs and also have adjustable chairs and a lap tray.

Makaton

This symbol based language programme may help children with communication difficulties, and books in Makaton are available through libraries. All libraries have the 'Communicate in Print' symbol package on computer.

Spoken Word CDs

Most libraries have stories on CDs and some larger libraries have quite comprehensive collections. Some have an accompanying large print book known as Read Along, and visually impaired children can borrow all of these free of charge.

Book Touch

One of the Bookstart packs for pre-school children is especially for children with a visual impairment. It is called Book Touch and is available free of charge for children up to the age of four. It contains two books, a leaflet with advice about reading with blind or partially sighted children, a list of recommended books, and a 'Ways of Reading' leaflet listing useful services relating to reading.

Games and puzzles

There is a collection which includes tactile jigsaws and puzzles, and games such as Braille monopoly and tactile dominoes. These can be ordered from any library.

Puppets

Some libraries have a small quantity of puppets and toys for children to enjoy at the library or at our musical Bounce & Rhyme sessions.

Storysacks

We have a large number of storysacks which were made for libraries by the WI. Each is based on a specific picture book and contains games, toys and other items which are intended to bring the story to life. They are used by childminders and pre-school groups who can order them from their local library.

Books for parents and carers

There is a resource collection covering all areas of special need, including visual impairment. Just ask in your local library.

Useful websites

- **RNIB:** www.rnib.org.uk
- **Listening Books:** www.listening-books.org.uk
Listening Books provides a talking book machine service, which can provide specially adapted machines for people with different disabilities. There is a good selection of audio books for the under 18 age group, to help those affected by dyslexia, learning difficulties, physical disability or illness. GCSE set texts are available, as well as best sellers like the Harry Potter books. The annual subscription is paid by Devon Libraries.
- **Young Calibre Audio Library:** www.calibre.org.uk
A larger selection of children's books on cassette is available through Calibre. This is a free lending library of books on CD or MP3, available directly through the post for anyone who cannot read ordinary books. There is a free children's catalogue with over 1,000 special recorded books. Telephone 01296 432 339 for further details.
- **The Living Paintings Trust:** www.livingpaintings.org
The Living Paintings Trust is a registered charity which offers a free service for visually impaired people of all ages, their families, carers and schools. They produce specialist touch and sound packs that explain a wide variety of pictures for those who cannot see.
- **National Blind Children's Society CustomEyes Books:** www.nbcs.org.uk/customeyes
This organisation provides custom made large print books for the benefit of children who cannot read commercially available print. Children and their parents or guardians can buy books for the same price as the original print copies.

Contact details

Address: Devon Libraries
Headquarters
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
Exeter
EX2 7NL

Phone: 01392 384315

Fax: 01392 384316

Email: devlibs@devon.gov.uk

Different formats

If you would like a summary of this in a different format such as large print, Braille or tape, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk

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