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The Salvesen Mindroom Centre’s
TOP TEN TIPS

for Parents and Carers of Children and Young People with Learning Difficulties

The Salvesen Mindroom Centre
no mind left behind
Introduction

We know that being a parent or carer of a child with any form of learning difficulty can be confusing, daunting, and even alienating. At The Salvesen Mindroom Centre, we’re committed to providing information, advice, and support—in a way that works best for you.

Here, we have brought together our Top Ten Tips for coping with some of the issues that you will encounter as you support your child with learning difficulties. We hope you find this a useful starting point on your journey.

**Be confident, not confrontational**

Remember that you know your child better than anyone else. It is natural to feel emotional when you are engaging with professionals on behalf of your child, especially if you feel your child is suffering because she or he isn’t getting the support they need. Showing emotion in a difficult situation is OK, and it does not detract from the fact that you have expert knowledge about what your child needs. However, try not to get angry or be aggressive.

**Consider all offers of support**

Remember to listen to suggestions from professionals. You may not always agree with what you hear, and you are of course entitled to turn down professional advice. However, don’t reject a suggestion without at least considering it—a partial solution might be better than none while you work towards securing the full support your child needs. This is the same as giving up on what you think should be provided, but compromising can help to build bridges.

**Take a solution-focused approach**

Having a diagnosis is often important, but it won’t solve every issue your child is facing. We will work with your family whether or not your child has a diagnosis but other services may not be open to you without one. Remember, even without a diagnosis your child is entitled to help at school if he or she is struggling.

**Communication is key**

Always try to maintain positive communication with school staff and health and care professionals. Be assertive, not confrontational! It’s worth taking time to think about how you have been feeling before, during, and following discussions. Keep a paper trail of your communications with school staff and health and care professionals (see The Salvesen Mindroom Centre’s keeping a paper trail guide—ask the Direct Help and Support team for a copy).

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TOP TIP 7
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