Hemiplegia Awareness Week - Primary Schools

Thank you for getting involved in our Hemiplegia Awareness week. We really appreciate all your support!

We hope that this information will enable you to plan and introduce Hemiplegia Awareness Week to your students, if you would like to talk to someone from HemiHelp about your plans, please don’t hesitate to call the office on 0845 120 3713.

If you have a child in the class with hemiplegia, please consult with them and their parents prior to this lesson to see if they have any ideas/desire for input, and please respect and act on their wishes.

In the past our members have done presentations in assembly and pupil led lessons. It is important that any child with hemiplegia is comfortable and happy with your class participating in these activities.

A note on the language and terminology used in this document – The Social Model and why HemiHelp works within it.

The social model of disability says that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person’s impairment or difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

The language used here (i.e. impairment not disability) is the most accepted and up to date appropriate language used by the disabled people’s community. Teachers should endeavour to use the phrases in this document for these activities.

Barriers are not just physical. Attitudes found in society based on prejudice or stereotype, also disable people from having equal opportunities to be part of society. The aim of Hemiplegia Awareness Week is to raise awareness of hemiplegia and increase understanding of the impairment to reduce barriers to full inclusion in society.
ACTIVITIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES – Suitable for Key Stage 2

- By undertaking this activity children will begin to identify that everyone does things differently and that no one way is always right. They will also get to try new ways of doing things.
- By undertaking this activity children may begin to identify that some objects are not designed with everyone in mind.
- Children begin to understand that there are life experiences beyond their own.

INTRODUCE HEMIPLEGIA AWARENESS WEEK

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DISCUSSION ABOUT HEMIPLEGIA

Hemiplegia is a neurological condition, the effects of which are similar to a stroke. It’s caused by damage to the brain (most often before or around the time of birth) and it results in a varying degree of weakness and lack of control on one side of the body. Hemiplegia affects one child in 1000.

However some children with hemiplegia also have “hidden” impairments – this video will explain this in more detail.

ACTIVITIES

We suggest setting up different stations so children can try a range of different activities wearing their mitten. Ideas include:

- Putting coins/small objects (with their mitten hand) in a container
- Opening a sweet/ piece of fruit
- Typing with one hand on a computer – their name, age and favourite ice cream flavour
- Bring in a shirt and ask a child to try and button it up
- Tying their shoe laces

You could try giving each task a time limit, maybe a minute to make sure they have attempted the task.

Please always discuss the task with the children, good questions include:

- What made it a challenge?
- How did it feel if you couldn’t do it?
- Were you able to find another way?
- Please do expand and adapt this lesson according to your timetable particularly good lessons to try the mitten / or a physical restriction of some kind are in

    I.T.  * Food Technology* Textiles* Physical Education* Practical Maths/Science
Further discussion

We encourage you to expand this lesson beyond hemiplegia and into all impairments, here are some questions you could ask/be asked:

**What does a disabled person look like?**

Answer: Just like non-disabled people, not everyone looks the same, you can’t always tell if someone is disabled or non-disabled just by looking at them and assuming is really unhelpful, you cannot see all impairments.

**Can a disabled person do everything I can?**

Answer: There is no reason why a disabled person cannot achieve anything they want, it might be harder or done in a different, more innovative way.