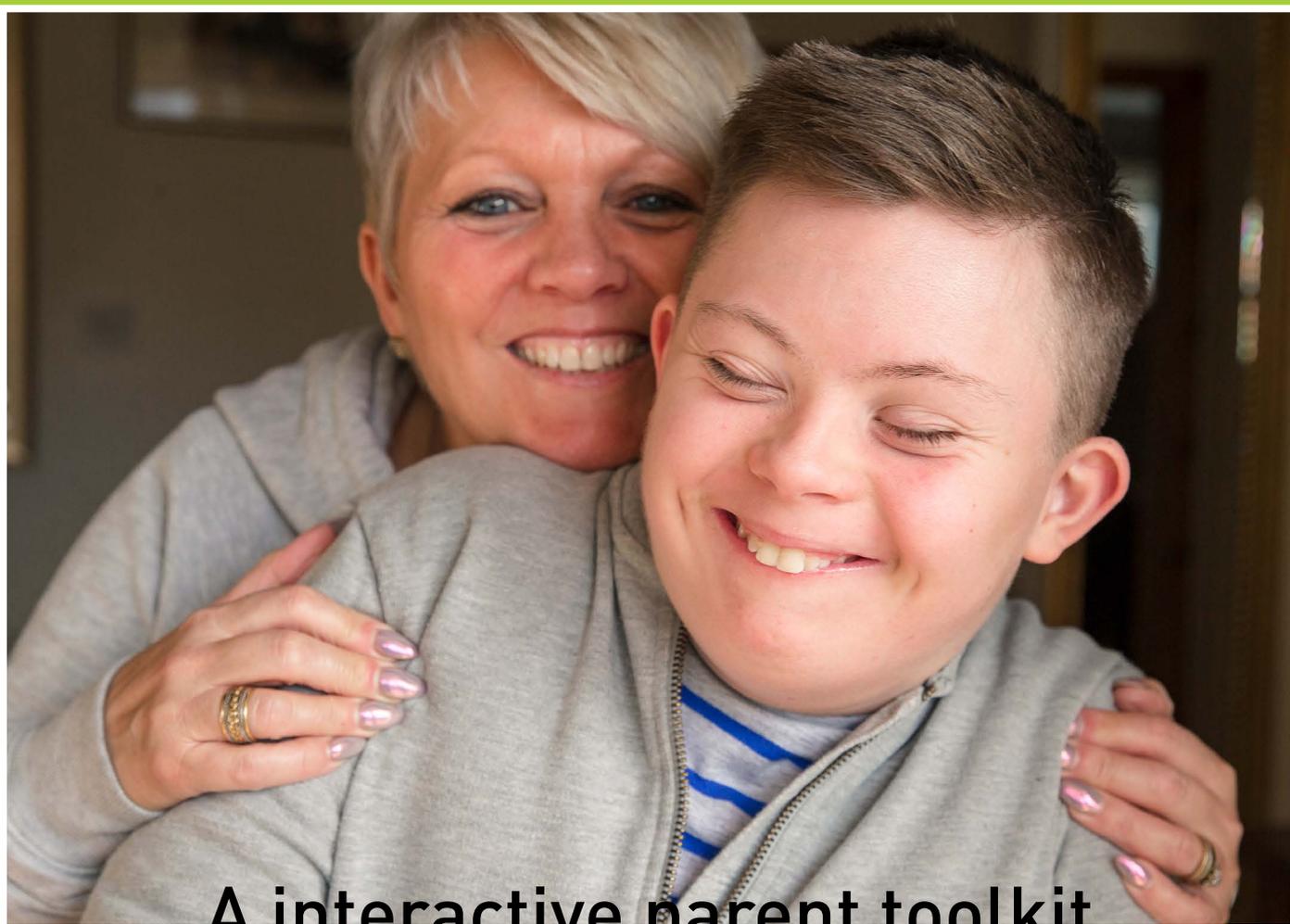


# Independent travel

A guide on how to support an individual with additional needs to become an independent traveller



A interactive parent toolkit

Admissions and Transport  
Children's Services  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)



The Travel Training programme has now been running successfully across Hertfordshire for over 10 years. We understand the importance of parents and carers feeling empowered to be able to support their sons and daughters with a range of independence related skills, including independent travel.

The aim of this toolkit is therefore to provide help and ideas on how to support young people with Special Educational Needs to travel independently. In this pack there are a number of tips and approaches currently used within Hertfordshire County Council's successful Travel Training programme. We know that the needs of each individual are very different, and it may give you some ideas of how to tailor your approach.

Although this toolkit is aimed at supporting young people who will be able to travel independently at some point, there are many elements that will be useful to support all young people in promoting independence.

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# What is travel training?

The purpose of travel training is to help young people with additional needs to be able to travel independently. There are many steps to cover and each step needs to meet the individual needs of the person who is training. Travel training is a process that requires planning, logical steps, and for the person being trained to be fully involved, allowing them to take responsibility for their journey towards independent travel.



# Why is travel training so important?

Travelling independently is an important part of a young person's development. Feedback from young people who have completed the travel training programme has shown that they;

- Feel more confident and independent
- Can go out a lot more with their friends
- Do not have to rely on specialist transport – or their parents/carers
- Have access to a greater range of college courses
- Have a better chance of finding and maintaining employment
- Do better at school
- Feel safer in the community

You may encounter some resistance from the young person regarding to travel training. They may have difficulties in social situations, struggle with a change of routine or may simply like the fact that it is easier for them to get lifts to places.

When discussing travel training with the young person emphasise the level of independence they will gain and the positive impact it will have on their lives. They could gain the skills to go and meet their friends whenever they like, it could boost their confidence and help them with their self-esteem and encourage them to try new life-changing experiences.



# What are the key principles?

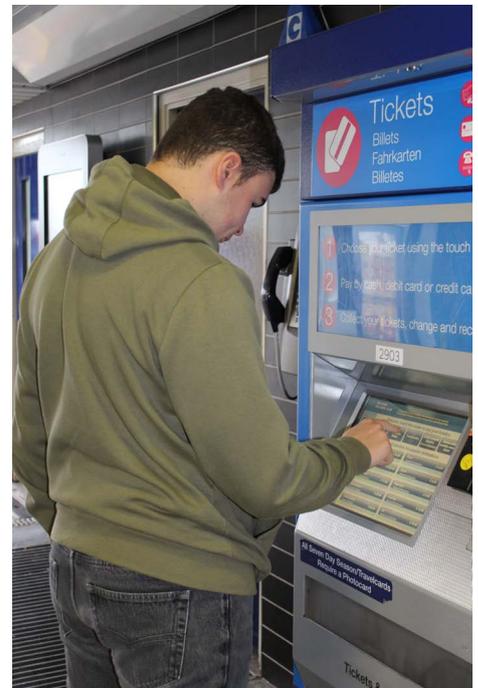
The needs of each individual are completely different; travel training is about working with each young person in the way that works best for them. There are however a number of key principles that you should be aware of;

- Patience required by both the person delivering the training and the trainee.
- Allowing mistakes to be made (we will cover this in more depth later).
- Not making assumptions about what you think the young person may already know is vital. As a parent/carer, you may feel you know your child better than anyone else, but try not to jump to the conclusion that “they won’t be able to do that”. Alternatively you may assume a certain level of knowledge within a specific area, where they may actually feel anxious or in need of support.
- Progress. Whilst it is important to make sure that skills are being developed, only move on to the next stage or skill once you both feel comfortable and confident. There is no harm in taking a break if needed, however consider how a break may affect progression and enthusiasm. If you do take a break, agree a timescale (it may be a week or two) for when travel training will continue and stick to it.
- Take into account how the young person is feeling; check in with them regularly. They may be anxious about a particular part of the journey or may not feel confident, even though you know that they have the skills. Don’t be afraid to revisit parts of the programme if you need to.
- Stay calm. This is a very important aspect of travel training and something that is easier said than done. As much as travel training will push a young person out of their comfort zone, it may also do the same for you.

# What should it cover?

(We will look at each of these individually later)

- » Road safety
- » Stranger awareness
- » Personal safety
- » How and where to ask for help
- » What to do if things go wrong
- » Planning a journey
- » How to use timetables and buy tickets



## Some general considerations.....

**Your approach to training:** Travel training is a process that differs in approach in relation to the individual needs of the person and the different routes being learnt. There may be an element of trial and error to see which approach best suits, but this is very much part of the process.



**Allowing mistakes:** This is a key part of travel training. Although as a parent/carer, this may be something you may find difficult, a lot can be learnt by making mistakes. It provides the opportunity to reflect back on the experience in order to identify what went wrong, and what needs to be changed when they repeat the journey. It also allows the young person to gain an understanding of some of the key principles of travel training:

- what should they do if something goes wrong?
- what to do if they need support?



**Skills:** Independent travel is more than just getting on and off a bus or train and being able to make a journey safely. There are a number of other skills that may be learnt, examples include:

- Locking the front door and handling keys, so that they can leave the house safely at the start of the journey and are able to let themselves in independently when they get home. This also helps young people to develop their skills regarding keeping valuables (such as keys) safe by storing them safely in a secure pocket or zip up compartment in a bag.
- Telling the time and understanding the 24 hour clock format, to ensure they can understand how much time has passed and knowing when to get off the bus and when it may be running late.

It may be helpful to write out a comprehensive list of every single step of the journey which includes the tasks that need completing for each step,

as well as the skills required. You can use this as a checklist or reminder when you are out with the young person. It may look something like this:

Make sure you have your charged phone, bus pass and some spare money → Lock the door as you leave the house → Walk down the path → Turn right on to Porter Street and walk along the road → Cross three roads (stopping, looking and listening carefully each time) → Turn left at Junction Road → Stop and look to your right for the bus stop over the road → Crossover the road to the bus stop → Wait for the Number 63 bus and put your arm out as it gets close (make sure they have enough time to see you) → Find a seat on the bus close to the exit → After about 15 minutes (use the clock on your phone as a guide) on the bus you will pass the Red Lion Pub on your left as you come into town → Get off the bus at the first stop after the pub → Look to your right and you will see Boots the Chemist → Walk towards Boots and take the second left on to Carter Street → Walk to the end of Carter Street until you reach Costa Coffee and you will see the College on your right.



Notes relating to a journey can be stored on a mobile phone for reference and you could take photos of landmarks/the bus/street signs etc. on your mobile phone to use as a visual guide to the journey. Alternatively, you could use an audio recording on a mobile phone as a guide.

**Identify and face the challenges:** There will be challenges along the way, for both of you; transport running late, forgetting the route or perhaps lack of interest and enthusiasm, or frustration from the young person. Don't shy away from these as they will be scenarios that will be faced whilst travelling. Stay confident in your approach and remember to have regular conversations about the possible challenges and how to overcome them.

**Considering risks:** Travelling on public transport can pose certain levels of risk for everyone, no matter what their age and level of need. Risks do exist and the best thing you can do is to teach the young person how to recognise danger and develop plans and coping mechanisms to stay safe. It may be useful for you to complete the journey on your own before starting travel training so you can familiarise yourself with the route, journey duration, bus timings as well as any potential hazards or risks. Some of the risks/hazards may be specific to the needs of the young person in terms of specific anxieties, behaviours or medical conditions. Things you may want to consider and measures you may put in place are included on the following page. It should give you an idea of how you can identify and manage some possible challenges along the route.



<b>Potential hazard</b>	<b>Control measures (Used to reduce risk)</b>
Adverse weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the young person has correct clothing/ equipment that is appropriate to the weather; waterproofs if raining, sun cream and bottle of water if sunny.</li> <li>• Ensure they know what to do if extreme weather, such as snow, affects transport or closes their destination. Make them aware of procedures to follow to contact their destination (such as their college or a leisure facility) to check if it is open and how to check travel routes (for example the use of travel apps or websites).</li> </ul>
Young person boarding the wrong bus or train/getting lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the young person knows to state their destination when boarding the bus and to confirm with driver that they are on the correct bus.</li> <li>• They can identify an appropriate person they can ask for support (see below).</li> <li>• They are aware of procedures they should follow; ensuring that they have a charged mobile phone with numbers stored of people they can call if they need support and are aware of whom they can call in different situations (using speed dial where appropriate).</li> <li>• Support the young person to recognise that they have got on the wrong transport (such as being able to identify landmarks specific to their journey).</li> <li>• Support them to be able to either show or verbalise personal details that they may need to give to an appropriate person who can support them.</li> </ul>

<p>Bus or train delayed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure they are aware of the process they would need to follow to contact their destination (if applicable) to let them know if they are running late.</li> <li>• If a delay is likely to cause anxiety with the young person, work with them to identify techniques they can use to manage these emotions (such as regulating breathing or techniques for distraction).</li> <li>• Use of travel apps so they can monitor progress/ arrival times of public transport.</li> </ul>
<p>Asking someone for help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the young person to ensure that they can identify who they can ask for help (such as bus driver or staff wearing uniform)</li> <li>• Ensure that they are able to relay the details of their destination to an appropriate person so that they can seek support</li> </ul>



# Stages of travel training

## 1. Starting point:

An initial assessment is an important part of travel training. An example has been included at the end of this pack that can be edited according to your own and the young person's individual needs. The assessment will help to gain an understanding of an individual's starting point; areas they are confident in, as well as those they identify as areas to develop. It is always useful to allow the person undertaking the training to self-reflect and to identify these areas themselves, so talk to them about how they feel about doing the journey. They may voice anxieties or worries that you were not aware of, some of which you may be able to help with and others which you may need to consider when planning the journey.

## 2. Identify journey/route:

Providing a very clear route is essential and it is important that you plan the most convenient route. Be clear about where you are going and how you will get there. It is helpful to plan a journey with a specific goal or purpose in mind. It could be to meet a friend or family member, or to go to a specific shop. Use the internet to look at routes and timetables. The use of apps on mobile phones such as Google maps are also a very useful resource as they can be used as a guide while on the journey (details of some apps that you may find useful appear are listed at the



end of this document within the Resources section). To prepare, it may help for you to do the journey first on your own (if you are not familiar with the route) so that you can see for yourself anything the young person may need to be aware of and any challenges that may arise.

Things that you may want to consider:

- How regular do buses/trains run if they miss one?
- Are there any main roads to cross? How safe is the route?
- Think about the different weather conditions. They may be doing the journey on a cold, dark December morning; what other factors/things should be considered?

### **3. Do the journey for the first time together:**

Once you have identified a journey and route you should carry out the journey together. Take it slowly, explaining each step and action as you go to make it as clear as possible, checking understanding along the way. Think of ways that you could help the young person remember parts of the route; it may be landmarks such as a church or particular shop and it may help for them to take pictures on their mobile phone which they can use as a point of reference. Highlight every aspect of the journey, no matter how insignificant you may feel it is; where to stand at the bus stop, how to signal for a bus, stating your destination to the driver, where to sit.....it is all useful information.

### **4. Continue doing the journey until they feel more comfortable and confident:**

Repetition is essential to learning and helps with building confidence. Once you are completely satisfied that the young person is comfortable with the journey, you may want to consider moving towards shadowing them on their journey. You may be satisfied that they are ready



even though they may feel otherwise, so encouragement may be needed. Celebrate their achievements to increase their confidence and remember that progress is really important; there may be times when they may need to push themselves out of their comfort zone. Ensure that this is done in a supportive way. You may find it helpful to make some notes to help you refresh your memory about things that have gone well or areas to develop. This can also be used to show them the progress they have made

### **5. Gradually withdrawing support:**

The move from supported, to shadowed travel and then to making journeys alone needs to be managed carefully. If you withdraw support too quickly, the young person may feel vulnerable, although you do need to make sure that progress is being made; a careful balance is required.

Shadowed journeys may involve several stages including walking a short distance behind (where you can check pedestrian and road safety skills), sitting on a different part of the bus or train, or following in a car and meeting the young person from the bus or train at the end of the journey or at the final destination point. Only withdraw support when both of you feel comfortable enough for this to happen. Make sure that this happens gradually enough so as not to cause any stress, but always enough to ensure progress. Make sure that you discuss withdrawal of support with the young person well in advance of it happening so that they are prepared and have time to process the idea.



## **6. Doing their first journey completely independently:**

This is the final stage of the travel training process and must only be considered when you are comfortable that the young person is able to complete the journey independently. Prior to their first independent journey, you may want to consider shadowing them so that they are unaware that you are there (such as following in a car, or involving a family friend who they may not be particularly familiar with). This allows you to continue to monitor their behaviour and skills in an environment where their behaviour is natural, giving a good idea of how they would do in a real life situation.

A good place to start is to allow them to make parts of the journey alone. For example, go with them to the bus stop but let them take the bus alone and meet them at the other end. You can do each section of the journey in this way, until they are ready to do all parts themselves.

## **7. Independent travel has been achieved....what next?**

Once the young person has started to travel independently along one particular travel route, it is good to introduce new routes. This may involve extra training, although it should take less time because they will be familiar with the key skills. Ensure that they regularly use the skills that they have learnt so the knowledge is kept fresh in their mind.



# What areas should travel training cover?

This section looks at the different areas or topics that are useful to cover when you are supporting someone to travel independently. Each topic is broken down into smaller parts, so you can see the individual subjects that you may wish to cover. There is no set order for these skills to be learnt, it depends on the needs of the person being travel trained as well as things such as the local area, bus routes etc.

## Road safety

- Use of different types of crossing; pelican, pedestrian and zebra crossings; how you would identify and use them.
- How and where you could identify a safe place to cross if a visible crossing was not available (a quiet part of road, not on a bend or corner, ensure they are not crossing between parked cars).
- What they should do before crossing (look both ways, listen out for cars approaching, be aware of emergency vehicles who may be travelling at speed).



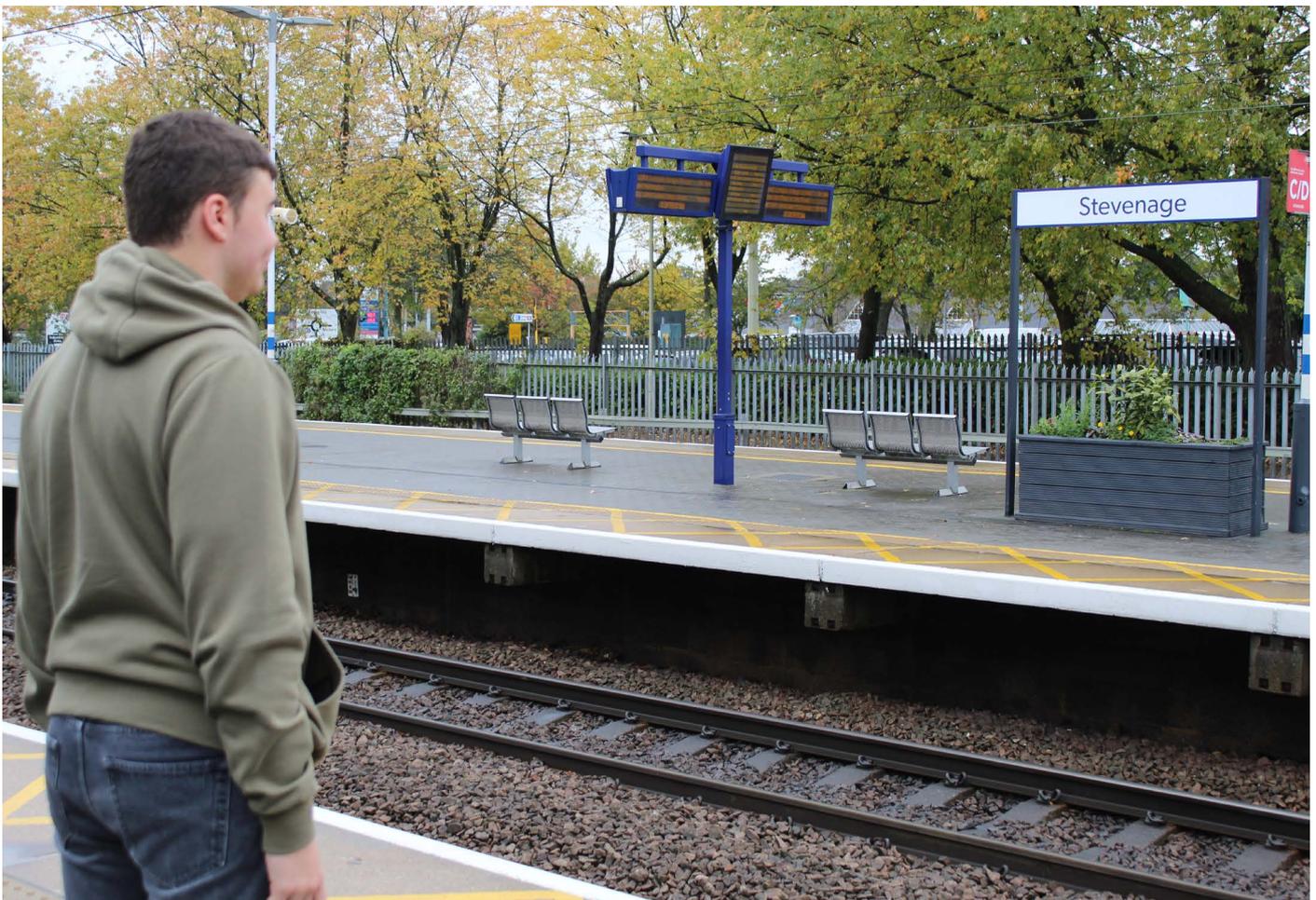
## Stranger awareness

- Try to move away from the idea of stranger danger toward an awareness of “safe strangers”. Consider that the vast majority of people in the community would be willing to help if asked.
- It is important to be vigilant with regards to strangers, but not all strangers pose a risk and they may need to ask someone for help (which is covered below). Things you can work on here relate to being aware about not giving out personal information such as their address or telephone number.

- Being aware that if they are in any doubt or feel vulnerable, they have someone they can contact via their mobile phone or that they can identify someone within the community who they can go to for support such as a police officer or PCSO (Police Community Support Officer).

## Personal safety

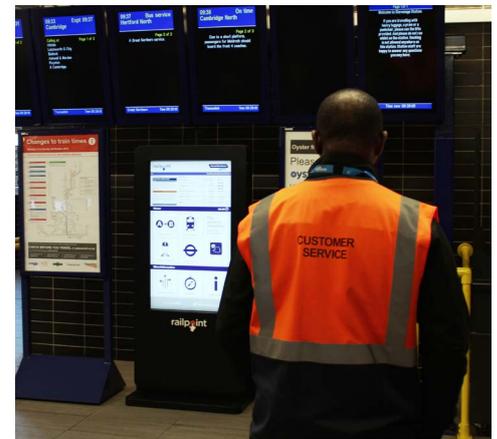
- Make sure that they are able to identify everything that they will need before setting off on their journey. This should always include a fully charged mobile phone, some money, their bus/train pass and may also include things that relate to any medical condition they have such as an inhaler or medication that they may need.
- Appropriate behaviour; including when waiting at a bus stop or train platform (staying a safe distance from the kerb or platform edge) and also while on the transport.



- Work with the young person to identify where the best place is to sit on a bus. Encourage them to sit at the front of the bus or near the doors, as it will be easier for them to get off the bus when it gets busy.
- Maintaining an awareness of personal safety when out and about in the community; although many people listen to music on their headphones while they are out and about, think about how this may affect them if they are crossing a road and listening out for traffic.

## How and where to ask for help

- It is important that the young person is able to identify people in uniform if they need to ask for help from someone at a bus or train station. They could practice this skill by identifying workers at a supermarket in uniform and being encouraged to ask them where certain items are.
- Work with them on identifying points where they can ask for help;
  - » If it is a train station it could be a ticket office or information stand.
  - » If it is a bus station, there may be staff around (in uniform, high visibility clothing or with a clipboard etc.) or they could ask bus drivers.
- Ensure that they state where they want to go when boarding a bus, even if they have a bus pass and may not necessarily interact with the driver. This gives the driver the chance to let them know if they do not go to that destination and also makes them aware of where they need to get off. You may know of the Orange Wallet Scheme, which allows it's users to identify themselves to drivers and travel staff as needing support when boarding public transport. Further details can be found in the resources section of this toolkit.



- It may be helpful to supply the young person with a card that has information relating to their journey so that they can relay this to someone if they need to ask for help or be used as a reminder with regards to aspects of the journey. You do however need to be aware of what personal information it contains should they lose it while out in the community, and support the young person to ensure that they understand how to store this information safely and securely.



## **What to do if things go wrong**

- Perhaps the most important resource that can be used during travel training is a fully charged mobile phone which contains the contact details of anyone they may need to speak to (friends, family, their college or place of work), who they can phone to let them know that they may be a bit late or need support.
- Asking for help (see above).
- Knowing how to correct the journey if they get off at the wrong place and knowing where they are travelling to are very important. You could identify a location that many buses go to such as a town centre and help them to identify a way of getting to where they need to go from this location.

- Recognise that there may be unexpected events that are beyond yours or the young person's control that may affect their experience. Unfortunately buses can be late and trains can be cancelled and this can prove particularly difficult for individuals who struggle with dealing with unforeseen circumstances. If this is the case, have regular conversations about what may happen in order to prepare them should they occur.

## Planning a journey

- How to use timetables and buy tickets (including how you can use apps or technology to check route disruptions or changes to timetables).
- What you should take with you before setting off on your journey (see the checklist section at the end of this document).



# Travelling in a taxi

Although the focus of this resource is on bus and train travel, it is worth mentioning taxi travel and how you may prepare a young person for travelling independently in a taxi. Whilst usually more expensive than bus or train



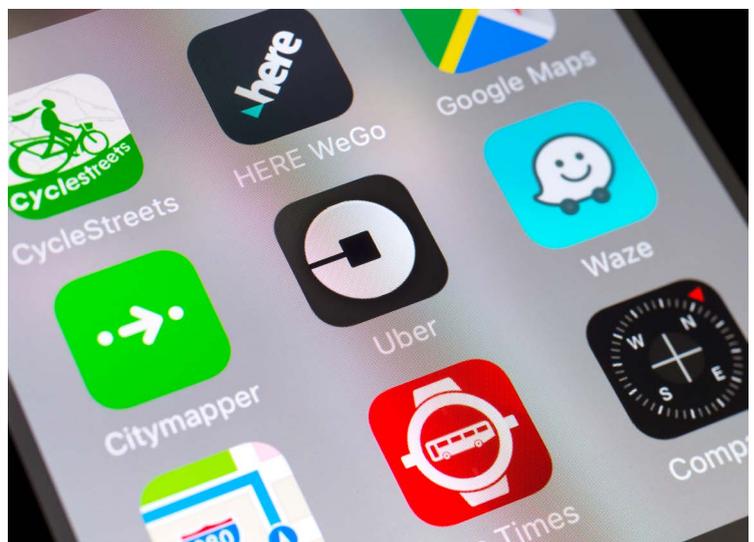
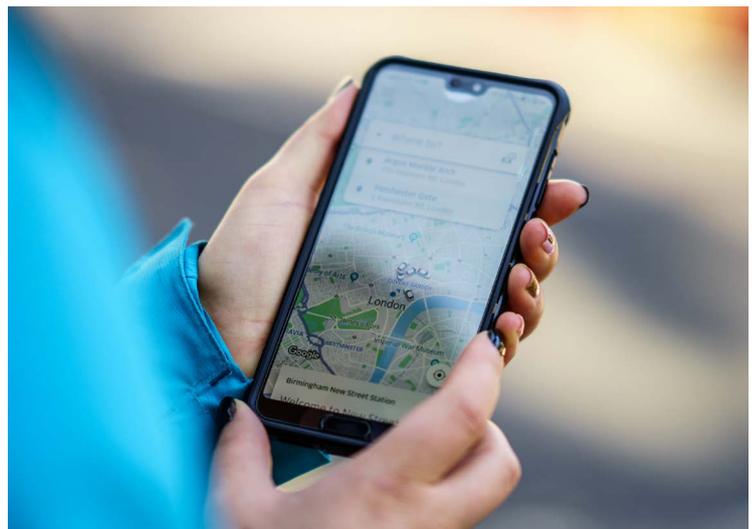
travel, taxis may provide a travel option that is more convenient and a taxi service may be worth considering if there are disruptions to (or during) a regular bus or train route, or during emergency situations where there is no other transport options.

There are a number of ways in which one may book and take a taxi journey; increasingly people use apps through which they can book, pay and maintain an account for journeys. A more traditional method is where you phone a taxi company to come and pick you up from an agreed destination. A third option may be to call/stop a taxi in the street, or getting into a taxi at a taxi rank while you are out and about. Consider the different ways the young person may want or need to access a taxi and which may be the most appropriate for them. You may want to consider helping them to gain an understanding of all of the different ways they can access taxis.



- The safest way to use a taxi is through an existing account that you have with a taxi firm. This ensures that the taxi firm is reputable and there may be an element of familiarity with particular drivers. You may wish to select a company that confirms the booking by text and gives the details of the journey and/or a description of the car that will be picking you up at the point of confirmation.
- Use of apps; there are a wide variety of apps that can be used for booking taxi journeys and maintaining an account with a company.

There are a number of advantages of using these types of resources. Firstly, you will find out beforehand the make and model of car that will be arriving so it is easy to recognise which taxi will be yours. Also, payment is normally confirmed beforehand and linked to an existing bank account. This reduces any confusion or anxiety around payment or the price of the journey changing or not being what is expected. You are also able to track the taxi as it approaches so you will be aware of the exact time of its arrival. If you are using apps, ensure that you take the time to fully familiarise yourself with how it works and ensure that the young person is comfortable with its use.



- If you are not using an app and are phoning a company for a taxi, there are a number of things that the young person will need to be made aware of. They will need to ensure that the taxi is actually theirs by having a conversation with the driver before getting into the car to



- ensure that the taxi is for them and to confirm their destination. Also, at the beginning of the journey they may wish to confirm the journey cost to ensure that they have enough money. It is recommended that when booking a taxi over the phone you request a cost estimate prior to the car arriving. You can have an idea of how much the journey will cost and can confirm the expected price with the driver.
- When travelling in a taxi it remains important that the young person is aware of and shown how they can contact yourself or another person to let them know that they have arrived safely.
  - In terms of what the young person may need to take on the journey, this would largely be the same as if they were taking a bus or train. A “checklist” (including a cut out version that can be kept in the young person’s bag or wallet and take on their journey) of what is recommended to take on a journey can be found at the end of the toolkit.

# Travel training Top Tips

## Do

- Give the young person ownership and fully include their input, views and ideas into the programme. Involving them in any decision making, and encouraging their own input and ideas will help them to gain a sense of involvement and responsibility over the training.
- Find the route/approach to travel training that best suits the young person.
- Repeat elements of the programme. It is important that they gain a full understanding of each part of the journey, so make sure that you are completely happy and comfortable with their understanding before you move on to the next part of the journey.
- Be strong and assertive when supporting the young person. There may be occasions when they may say that they “can’t be bothered” or make excuses why they shouldn’t go on the bus. If this happens, the consequence may be that they just don’t go, instead of you offering to drive them. Make sure you challenge appropriately, while remaining positive and encouraging.
- Practice constantly. Skills involved in travel training can be practiced in a variety of situations, even if you are not out travel training at the time. You may be out at the shops together, providing an opportunity for them to pay for items on your behalf to get them used to speaking to people who they may not know as they would with a bus driver.
- Allow mistakes to be made. It is a very important part of the travel training process and very much a part of everyday life. Mistakes are ok as long as plans are in place to deal with these eventualities; with mistakes, comes learning.

## Don't

- Make assumptions about what the young person may or may not be capable of. As their parent or carer, you will know them better than anyone; however, it is a valuable part of the process for them to reflect on areas where they feel competent and ones they wish to develop. Try and let them guide you where you can.
- Give up. There may be occasions when you feel it is best to take a break from the training, particularly if either or both of you are feeling frustrated about the training. This is fine but agree a time for training to resume. This ensures that anything already learnt is not forgotten and also prevents the break becoming indefinite, and training abandoned.
- Get too worried or anxious about the travel training process. It is understandable that the thought of the young person travelling independently may cause you to worry. However, it is very easy for them to pick up on this worry or anxiety. If you've put everything in place that you can, and you are both comfortable with the process, you are on the right track.
- Stop communicating. Travel training can be a frustrating process, both for the person supporting and the person being trained; it is important to recognise this and not let frustrations from either side hamper progress. If issues arise, talk about them, encourage open conversation and honesty from both parties, so you can understand each others feelings and experiences.



# Useful Resources

**Walkit.com:** This is a walking map and route planner that can be used to plan a walking route between any two points and calculate the estimated journey time. It can be used to plan journeys from home to bus stops and from bus stops to any location.

**Arriva UK Bus App:** This is a free app which you can download on your iPhone or Android smart phone. It gives live departure times of local buses, information on bus stop locations, and the ability to track your bus in real time so you can see how far away it is and when it will arrive.

**UK Bus Checker App:** Also free to download on iPhone or Android, this brings you live bus time, smart route planning and detailed route maps for bus journeys across the UK. It provides regularly updated information on diversions, closures and cancellations and the chance to explore a 3D map of your route. You can also save your favourite stops and routes for easy access.

**Safe24:** Another free app on iPhone and Android, this can be used to locate your friends or family members on a map in real time. It can also be used to send notifications when an individual arrives at a location and mark favourite places, such as home, friends' houses and school/college. This may provide you with peace of mind as the young person embarks on their first few independent journeys.

**Met Office app:** Weather can really impact upon public transport and journey times. This app is free to download and offers the user the opportunity to view up to date weather forecasts, including a 5 day preview, as well as real time weather warnings. This can be a useful tool in terms of planning your journey, possible impact to services and how you may need to adjust what time you may need to leave.

**Skills Audit:** At the end of this document there is a skills audit that you can refer to or print off and use as a guide to identify and evidence the skills that the young person has developed. Please feel free to make any changes that you feel are reflective of yours and the young person's own circumstances.

**Orange Wallet Scheme:** this scheme allows users to identify themselves to drivers and travel staff as needing support when boarding public transport. Further information and how you can apply for one may be found within the travel wallet section at;

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/transport-for-older-people-and-disabled-people/travel-wallet.aspx>

# Orange Travel Wallet



If you use **buses** in Hertfordshire and **you are a disabled person**



You can have a **travel wallet** to **help you when you travel**



You can use the travel wallet to **ask bus drivers** for the help you want

**To find out more and to get your travel wallet** you can



Use this **QR code**



Phone **01438 845016** from **9am to 5pm** you can **talk to someone** if you **hold** or **Press 3** for an Orange Travel Wallet and leave a message



Go to this website  
**[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/orangetravelwallet](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/orangetravelwallet)**

# Concessions

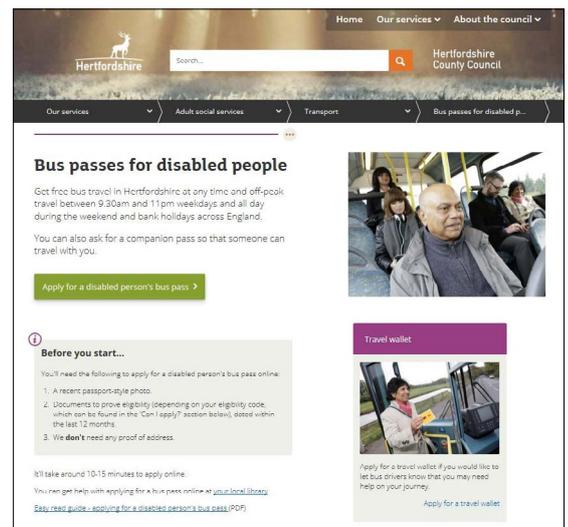
It is highly recommended that you get a bus pass (or disabled person's bus pass) for the young person. Not only does this work out cheaper than paying daily for a ticket, but you can also travel for free during certain times of the week. You may also be able to apply for a companion pass (C+) so that someone can travel with the young person free, bear this in mind when making your application.

For information on how to apply for a bus pass, visit Hertfordshire County Council's website; [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk), and type "bus pass" in the search box.

For train travel, you may wish to apply for a disabled person's railcard, which offers discounts on certain tickets and for those who may be accompanying individuals on journeys. You can also register for discounts when using an Oyster Card.

For further information, visit; [www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk](http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk)

Alternatively you can call 0345 605 0525 or email; [disability@raildeliverygroup.com](mailto:disability@raildeliverygroup.com)



# Checklist

**This is a general, but by no means definitive list of things that the young person may need to remember to take with them before each journey.**

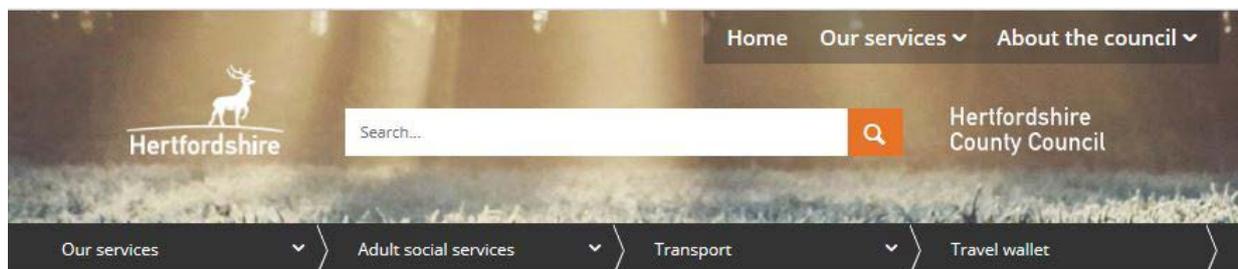
**Mobile Phone;** Charged and with credit if required and containing numbers that the young person knows they can call for support/in case of emergency. A mobile phone is a vital resource during the travel training experience. It not only provides the young person with the ability to contact someone if they need support but can also be used to plan journeys and keep updated on any issues that may affect their travel plans. It may not necessarily need to be a smart phone (though we have found that smart phones can be useful if a student prefers to communicate via emoji's or needs to use apps while out and about), or a phone with a contract, it could just be a pay as you go phone, that allows the young person to keep in touch and let you know how they are getting on with their journey.

If they do have a mobile phone, remember to include this as part of their training; to ensure that it is charged before they begin their journey at the start of the day (putting their phone on charge before going to bed is something they could take responsibility for), and again ensure they maintain it has enough charge for the return journey home. Part of the training may be to identify somewhere they can charge their phone during the day or to monitor their use to make sure they don't use up all of their charge playing games or using the internet.



**Bus Pass:** A bus pass is extremely important for the young person's journey towards independent travel. By getting them used to using the pass while they are travel training, they should be comfortable with it by the time they come to travel independently. When applying for a bus pass, you may be able to apply for one that has a C+, as it means you can travel with them for free while you are helping them to learn to travel independently. This can be changed at a later date. Copies of bus pass application forms are available on the Hertfordshire County Council website.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/transport-for-older-people-and-disabled-people/travel-wallet.aspx>



## Travel wallet – let bus drivers know what help you need

A travel wallet is bright orange and has plastic pockets inside. You can keep everything together that helps you use the bus on your own.

[Apply for a travel wallet >](#)



They can be used by anyone who travels on a bus and has:

- a learning disability
- a physical disability
- hearing or sight loss.

Travel wallets are free.

You can make cards to keep in your travel wallet. You can show these to the bus driver to show what help you might need or where you're going.

Your cards might include:

- emergency contact information
- help you need – for example: "I'm deaf, please look at me when you speak."
- where you want to travel to.

**Route information card:** Although not essential this may be useful for many young people. This card (perhaps kept behind their college ID card) would include their journey details, which bus they need to catch, the times and information that may help them to learn and remember the route. You may also want to include some useful telephone numbers (in case their mobile phone is lost or out of charge), for example people they could phone if they need help or the number of their college. However, do consider what information you include if you choose to use this method. If the card is dropped or lost along the route, you will not want to run the risk of personal details (such as home address or personal telephone numbers) falling into the hands of a stranger. An alternative would be to input these details into the young person's mobile phone and ensure that the phone has a lockable safety feature, so only they can access the content. If you decide to put the information on a card you may want to discuss keeping it safe and where to put it.

**Medication:** If the young person regularly uses medication for a medical condition they have, such as an inhaler, ensure that they have this with them when they are out travel training.

**Money:** It is always worth making sure that the young person has a few pounds with them (enough to cover a bus fare), in case they lose their bus pass while they are out and about, ensuring that they can still get home if this occurs.

On the next page is a list of things that someone may need to take with them for their journey.



You could print this off and cut it out for the young person to keep in their pocket, bag or wallet so that they can use it to prepare for their journey. Feel free to change it to add any things that you think are important for the young person you are supporting.



Before leaving on my journey, I will need;

1. **Mobile phone**; make sure it is fully charged and has all the numbers that you will need stored in it.
2. **Bus pass/railcard**; you will need this to travel
3. **Money**; you may need to buy a ticket if you lose your bus pass or you may want to buy something while you are out and about.
4. **Medication**; if you take any medicines or have an inhaler, you may need this on your journey
5. **Route information card**; you may want to write out the details of your journey such as what destination to ask for on the bus or the number of bus or train you will need.

The Travel Training team are always pleased to hear feedback from families and young people who have used the toolkit, so please feel free to contact us with any thoughts or suggestions relating to the use of this guide. Alternatively, if you have any questions relating to your own experience of travel training, we are happy to offer support. You can contact us at [schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Further information regarding home to school transport support for young people aged 16 - 18 and 19 - 25 years old is available at; [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

**These are the skills that someone needs to demonstrate to be an independent traveller. This is a check list for you to use with the young person to see how they are progressing and developing their skills. You may want to edit this to reflect your own experiences, the place where you live or the specific needs of the individual**

<b>Before leaving on a journey</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Tick when observed</b>
Remember to fully charge my mobile phone		
Be able to plan a route		
Remember to take everything I need for the day (Mobile/bus pass/ money/college badge/ lunch)		
Know who to phone in an emergency		
Be able to identify what time I would need to leave to arrive at my destination in time		
I know what I have to wear depending on what the weather is like		
I can state my name and address or display this to someone using my mobile phone		
I know who I should and shouldn't give this information to		

On my journey and using crossings	Comments	Tick when observed
I can walk safely from my house to a bus stop/train station		
I can identify and use a zebra crossing safely		
I can identify and use a light controlled crossing safely		
I can identify and use a pelican crossing safely		
I can identify a safe place to cross that isn't a recognised crossing point		
I can identify where to stand safely on a kerb and why I would do this		
I can identify three hazards other than cars than I need to think about when crossing the road		
I can identify the safest place to walk on a pavement		



Using transport	Comments	Tick when observed
I can identify the bus stop or train platform that I need to use for my journey		
I can identify the bus or train that I need to catch from displayed information (display or timetable)		
I am aware where it is safe to stand at the bus stop/platform when waiting for the bus or train		
I am able to state to the driver the destination I would like to go to		
I can pay for my fare or scan my pass correctly		
I can identify a safe place to sit on the transport and why I would sit there		
I can push the button in correct time to stop the bus in time for my stop		
I can exit transport safely at the correct stop		



<b>The people that I meet and how I communicate</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Tick when observed</b>
I can identify who to ask for help or information and what they may look like		
I am able to ask for the correct information for my journey		
I am able to let my parent/ carer know that I have arrived at my destination/ on my way home		
I know what to do if I am unsure and cannot find anyone to help		
I would know how to correctly respond to a stranger		
I would know when to phone who is expecting me to let them know that I am running late or phone my parent/carer		

<b>Other things I may need to do</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Tick when observed</b>
I can add contacts to my phone and have all the numbers I need		
I know where to keep my phone so I can hear it if it rings or feel it vibrate		
I can ensure that my phone has enough charge throughout the day so I can phone someone on the way home if I need to		