



# Getting started for children who are braille users

Here are some ideas to help you set up a learning space at home and to get started.



## 1. Make a quiet space where your child can do their work at home

Find a place for learning where your child can sit comfortably at a table or a desk with their feet touching the floor to help them feel stable. Turn off the TV and radio when the child is learning.



## 2. Encourage your child to use their aids and resources

These include accessibility options on their tablet or laptop computer, refreshable braille display, hard copy braille as required and any prescribed glasses or magnifiers. Use real objects and materials and hands on experiences whenever possible - learn by doing.



## 3. Keep learning tools organised and in their own designated places.

At the place where your child will do their learning help them to organise the materials needed to complete schoolwork. A set of shelves, plastic drawers or a storage container so that equipment or materials used often, such as a braille machine, wikki stix, spur wheel, braille paper and other items are nearby. If these items are kept in the same place then this will reduce the need to constantly look for them. You could:

- Use a baking tray or a sectioned serving tray while using items and manipulatives. This way items cannot roll off the table.
- A non-stick mat also helps to keep items in place including braille pages and braille machines.



## 4. Incorporate the use of tactile markers to assist with place marking and tagging.

Markers such as felt or raised stickers, ribbons, wikki stix, blu-tac and adhesive notes can help your child locate certain places or questions in workbooks. Tap your finger where your child needs to start reading or feeling on the page or on the table.



## 5. Use explicit instructions

When giving your child an instruction use precise words such as *Put your writing page in the bottom drawer.*



## 6. Use words to describe how objects feel

Think about the weight, ends and edges, size, shape, sound, texture and temperature and use comparisons. The small wooden block is as light as a ping-pong ball.



### 7. Learning from part to whole

Children who are tactual and braille users learn about the world and objects from small parts that fit under their hands or fingers to the whole, by piecing all of the parts together. This takes time.



### 8. Scribing for your child

There may be times when your child, for example, is tired or the lighting isn't quite right that it will be helpful if you write for your child. When scribing it is really important that you write or type what your child tells you, without correcting grammar so the teacher sees their work. Another helpful tip is to speak out loud as you write.



### 9. Fatigue

If your child needs to focus on their tasks in shorter periods of time due to fatigue, try starting the day with some activities, then have a movement break, do some more schoolwork, then have morning tea or lunch with a relaxing task and continue alternating table tasks with other activities.