

There are children and young people in care who have Special Needs. Many of these children enjoy good health, attend their local school, playsports and are able to care for themselves. Other children and young people have more intensive special needs and may require more intensive help from a carer like assistance with their daily personal care, more intensive behavioural management, use of mobility devices - eg. wheelchairs - or have specialised medical or nursing care needs.

The range of Special Needs can include:

- physical
- intellectual
- medical
- behavioural.

For some children and young people in care they may have a combination of these special needs, for example physical and intellectual or physical and medical. So, the severity of the child's special needs and the intensity of the support they require from a foster carer varies from child to child.

People interested in caring for children with special needs may need to:

- work with a greater number of services and / or professionals, eg. Paediatricians, Nutritionists, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Tutors, Youth Workers, Medical Consultants, Disability Services etc
- modify their home to cater for the child's needs, eg. create extra space for mobility, remove hazards for safety, modify taps, handles, bathrooms for daily living needs, NT Families and Children (NTFC) can provide assistance to carers towards modifications of the home environment, once a suitably trained person has assessed what specific modifications are required
- provide a more intense level of daily care to the child or young person in accordance with their needs or capacity to care for themselves
- attend specialist appointments on a regular basis
- provide a higher level of one-on-one time to support the child in their social, emotional and personal development
- attend specialised training opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge required to care for the child's special needs be supported with regular respite care, in recognition that caring for children with special needs places greater demands and challenges upon carers.