Conductive Education

About Conductive Education

Conductive Education is a learning system designed to enable children and adults with disabilities to achieve greater independence. It was developed in Hungary, but British therapists and teachers have used elements of the system for over 20 years and now there are a growing number of British qualified conductors (teachers).

This factsheet explains what Conductive Education is, how it is used, and its practice in Britain.

Who can benefit?

Conductive Education may be appropriate for children and adults who have motor disorders. This means they have problems with movement because of damage to areas of the central nervous system that are responsible for organising smooth, efficient movement. Relevant conditions include cerebral palsy, hemiplegia following a stroke or road accident, spina bifida, Parkinson’s disease and multiple sclerosis.

For children with conditions like cerebral palsy and spina bifida, it is advisable to begin Conductive Education as early as possible. It is not suitable for everyone and it is not a cure. It may, however, enable some children to achieve greater independence.

It is important to establish if Conductive Education is suitable for your child, so an assessment is necessary if you are considering this approach. Some therapies work well for some children, whilst other methods are more appropriate for others. Conductive Education is one of a number of approaches, which meets the needs of some children very effectively.

Where is it available?

Conductive Education provision has grown across the UK. The Craighalbert Centre in Cumbernauld is the main Scottish Conductive Education centre/school for young people.
with cerebral palsy. They take children from age 0 to 10 years. (See end for contact
details).

Some therapists in Capability Scotland schools, Capability Scotland Therapy Services
and the National Health Service use elements of the work, often in conjunction with
other specialist therapy techniques such as those developed by the Bobath Centre.
(See our factsheet on Bobath Therapy).

**How much will it cost? Can I get financial support?**

Children undertaking Conductive Education will usually have a Co-ordinated Support
Plan and therefore may be sponsored by their local education department to attend
Craighalbert. The need for parents to find the funding themselves for their children to
attend the Centre is very rare. There is a free service, sponsored by the charity 'Friends
of Craighalbert', for children under two years of age.

**The daily routine**

Conductive Education sees the child as a whole, not just in terms of their particular
special needs. Conductive Education would not, therefore, just direct programmes at,
for example, the affected side of a hemiplegic child, but at both sides. However, every
activity that the child takes part in will be beneficial to their particular needs, as long as it
is carried out correctly.

Conductive Education is concerned with the development of the child throughout the
whole day and, most importantly, develops an active child. The child's daily routine will
include several series of tasks carried out in different positions, for example the lying,
sitting and standing-walking positions. It is important to understand that these are all
inter-linked. Skills that are learnt in these various positions will be applied in activities
throughout the day.

It is also important to realise that a programme, for example in the lying position, is not
purely physical. The conductor uses this time to develop age-appropriate cognitive,
social and emotional skills, like learning colours, numbers, directions, etc. Above all,
Conductive Education seeks to develop high self-esteem.

**The group**

The group plays an important part in the development of the personality and social skills
of the child. Conductive Education works with groups containing a variety of children, to
provide essential support and encouragement as well as to motivate and give
opportunities for the children to learn from each other. However, every child within the
group receives individual attention at their specific level.
The conductor

The conductor’s role is to be aware of and develop all aspects of the child by establishing a good working relationship with them. It is felt that one of the ways in which children develop is by experiencing success. It is therefore the conductor’s job to give the child a goal that, with a little bit of work, can be achieved. Once this goal has been achieved the child is given a new goal which again will encourage development. Conductors continuously observe the children in order to modify the goals as necessary to assist the child’s development. In this way the conductor ensures that the children experience success and feel proud of what they are doing.

The parents and carers

Conductive Education works in partnership with parents, carers and others interested in the child’s development. Skills learnt by the child can be applied to daily life and therefore it is important that parents, carers and other interested people are involved in and understand the Conductive Education learnt by the child.

For more information about services available in Hungary contact:

The International Section
Peto Intezet
1539 Budapest
P.O. Box 683
Hungary
Tel: 0036 1224 1518
Email: ce@peto.hu
Website: www.peto.hu

For more information about services available in the UK contact:

The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments
Craighalbert Centre
1 Craighalbert Way
Cumbernauld
G68 0LS
Tel: 01236 456100
Email: sccmi@craighalbert.org.uk
Website: www.craighalbert.org.uk

National Institution for Conductive Education
Cannon Hill House
Russell Road
Moseley
Birmingham
B13 8RD
As with any therapy or treatment, we advise people with cerebral palsy, carers and parents to consult their GP, Consultant or health professional before starting or paying for any treatment.

Due to the individual nature of cerebral palsy, some children will benefit from specific treatments and therapies, others will not. Assessment of your child’s individual needs is very important.

This factsheet is for information purposes only and is not intended to be a recommendation.

Our Advice Service
Advice Service Capability Scotland is a national disability advice and information service. We specialise in information on cerebral palsy.

We offer:
- information on Capability Scotland services
- advice on cerebral palsy
- general advice on disability issues

We also have a small lending library with resources about cerebral palsy and children’s books about disability.

You can get in touch with us by calling, e-mailing, dropping in or writing a letter.

Advice Service Capability Scotland
11 Ellersly Road
Edinburgh
EH12 6HY
Tel: 0131 313 5510
Textphone: 0131 346 2529
Fax: 0131 346 7864
Email: advice@capability-scotland.org.uk
Web: www.capability-scotland.org.uk

This factsheet can be made available in other formats e.g. tape, large print.

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