

# Playgroups are for everyone!

## Inclusive space at playgroup

All families are looking for a quality play environment when they join a playgroup. Every playgroup venue is different and it isn't always possible to suit all needs, however we can try! Some tips for common considerations are listed here. It is always good to ask families what they need and aim to be flexible and adapt activities or the space, as needed. If one playgroup really isn't suitable for a family, there may be another one nearby which may work better, or the playgroup could apply for a grant to upgrade facilities at their venue, or discuss with venue owners to see what can be achieved. Keep in mind the most important thing is to have a flexible, can-do attitude.

- Find out what toys are best for the children at playgroup and aim to provide these.
- Have sensory play activities such as sand, water, playdough, rice, messy play, bubbles and music.
- Be flexible and have a variety of options. Children may not feel like doing an activity and that's ok.
- Some children may prefer to bring their own food or snacks.
- Have separate sections for different toys. It's great to have a low sensory, quiet space that children can go to where things aren't as bright or loud. It's also helpful to have options to do physical activity.
- Have soft fall equipment such as gym mats and cushions.
- Have lots of space and clear pathways so prams, walkers and wheelchairs can get through and children can move around easily.
- Too much clutter can be distracting and overwhelming.
- Here are some additional considerations which would be great, if possible at your venue:
  - Wide doors and entrance pathways, and accessible toilets, suitable for people with wheelchairs.
  - Fenced and gated space to protect children who like to run. Ideally, double entrances and gated locking system if possible. Also locked kitchens and toilets if possible.
  - Have an outdoor space with activities for children such as sandpit, ride-ons, bouncy toys and balls.