

Please find enclosed a 'Reducing Choking Risk' information pack from the Learning Disabilities Speech and Language Therapy Service.

The aim of this resource pack is to provide service users and their family/support staff with support and resources, which can be personalised to reduce choking risks.

Within this pack please find:

- **'How to Reduce the Risk of Choking' booklet**
(Created by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust).
- **'What is Choking and What Helps' easy-read leaflet**
(This resource may be beneficial in explaining the causes of choking and the strategies to reduce risk to service users. If further easy-read information is required, please consider contacting the Inclusive Communication Essex service; their details can be found online at: <https://www.essexice.co.uk/>).
- **Examples of visual support placemats**
(Please note, these will need to be personalised to each service user before use. Please consider whether an individual may require photos or symbols, to best support their understanding).
- **'High Risk Foods' leaflet and Bitesized (1.5x1.5cm) grid**
(These are foods that increase the risk of choking and therefore should be avoided or adapted to reduce risk e.g. by cutting into bite-sized pieces or by adding sauce).
- **'How to implement a two-plate system' guidance**
(Please note, the positioning of the individual providing food/plates may need to be adapted to suit the individual's needs and preferences).
- **Social Story on 'Good Eating'**
(Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like an electronic version of this social story).
- **'Bite-sized Plate' guide**
(This may be useful to laminate and display in kitchens/food preparation areas. This may also be useful to take with you, when eating out in the community, to ensure food is cut to the correct size).

It is strongly recommended that all those supporting service users read and make themselves familiar with **'Reducing the risk of choking for people with a learning disability. A multi-agency review in Hampshire.'** This provides some practical recommendations that services can implement, to reduce the risk of choking with service users. This can be found online at:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/adultservices/safeguarding/Reducingtheriskofchokingforpeoplewithalarningdisability.pdf>

Please also see the table below for the contact details of other services, which may be able to provide additional support / advice, with regards to other factors that may impact on an individual's risk of choking.

Factor Increasing Choking Risk	Team	Contact
Behaviours (possible need for a Positive Behaviour Support Plan)	Community Learning Disabilities Team	01206 366653/ 01376 308700
Dental Care	Specialist Dentist Primary Care Centre Colchester/ Witham Health Centre Witham	01206 286568/ 01376 531013
Sensory Needs	Learning Disabilities NE Essex Occupational Therapy Team	01206 363255

If you wish to discuss a possible referral to Speech and Language Therapy, please do not hesitate to contact the Learning Disabilities Speech and Language Therapy team on: 01206 363255. A senior member of the team is on-call, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, to answer your query.