Disabled Village Children

A guide for community health workers, rehabilitation workers, and families

By David Werner

with the help of many friends Drawings by the author

Playgrounds for all children. (Drawings by the author)

A disabled child with his wheeled walker.
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This is a reference book to help you meet the needs of disabled children. You need not read it from cover to cover. Use it to look up particular information as you need it.

Short black lines on page-edges.

To learn how the book is organized, and why, we suggest you read ABOUT THIS BOOK at the beginning. Also, please read the introduction to each of the 3 main parts of the book. These chapters have page edges with a short black line, to help you find the beginning of PARTS 1, 2, and 3.

To work more effectively with disabled children, we strongly suggest that you read the first 5 chapters of PART 1. These will help you to examine a child, to identify different disabilities, and to keep important records in an easy way.

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO FIND INFORMATION THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR:

- Check the list of CONTENTS at the beginning of the book. This tells you what each chapter is about and gives the page numbers.

- Look in the INDEX at the end of the book. It lists topics in alphabetical order. (The edges of these pages are all black.)

- If you do not know what disability a child has, use the GUIDE FOR IDENTIFYING DISABILITIES on Page 52 to 58. It lists the common signs of different disabilities and gives the page numbers. (There are several black lines on the edges of these pages.)

Throughout the book you will find this symbol \( \text{CP} \) in the margin of some pages. It appears where there is information for cerebral palsy.

If you want more information than is in this book, see the list of books and teaching materials entitled REFERENCES (Where to Get More Information), Page 637.

If you do not know what some words mean, look in the LIST OF SPECIAL OR DIFFICULT WORDS, Page 643. Words explained in this LIST are written in italics when first used in a chapter.

IMPORTANT: To find all the information you will need for one disabled child, you will usually need to look in several different chapters. To know where to look, follow the page references shown. These are explained inside the back cover.

* Asterisk: This little star is called an asterisk. It is used to indicate that there is more information about a word or an idea at the bottom of the page.
This book is dedicated to disabled children everywhere, with the hope that they and their families will help lead the world to be more loving, understanding, and just for everyone.

REQUEST FOR YOUR SUGGESTIONS, CRITICISMS, AND IDEAS

This book is an attempt to pull together basic information to help you meet the needs of village children with a wide range of disabilities.

We have done the best we can, given our limitations. We know the book is not perfect and that it has weaknesses and perhaps some mistakes.

We urge anyone reviewing or using the book, whether a disabled person, parent, health worker, or professional, to send us all your criticism and suggestions. Help us to make improvements for a later edition. Thank you.

CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS BOOK

PART 1. WORKING WITH THE CHILD AND FAMILY:

Information on Different Disabilities

Chapter 1, Introduction to PART 1: Making Therapy Functional and Fun
A. Where Do We Start?

Chapter 2, Ideas for Sharing Information from This Book

Chapter 3, Prevention of Disabilities

Chapter 4, Examining and Evaluating the Disabled Child
B. Recognizing, Helping with, and Preventing Common Disabilities

Chapter 6, Guide For Identifying Disabilities

Chapter 7, Polio

Chapter 8, Contractures: Limbs That No Longer Straighten

Chapter 9, Cerebral Palsy (difficulty with movements because of brain damage)

Chapter 10, Muscular Dystrophy: Gradual, Progressive Muscle Loss

Chapter 11, Club Feet, Flat Feet, Bow Legs, and Knock-knees

Chapter 12, Common Birth Defects (cleft lip, extra or joined fingers, incomplete I and arthrogryposis)

Chapter 13, Children Who Stay Small or Have Weak Bones (includes Rickets, Brittle Bone Disease, and Dwarfism)

Chapter 14, Erb's Palsy: Arm Paralysis from Birth Injury

Chapter 15, Painful Joints (includes How to Use Aspirin)

Chapter 16, Juvenile Arthritis

Chapter 17, Rheumatic Fever

Chapter 18, Hip Problems

Chapter 19, Bone Infections

Chapter 20, Spinal Curve and Other Back Deformities

Chapter 21, Tuberculosis of the Backbone - Pott's Disease

Chapter 22, Spina Bifida (babies born with a defect over their backbone)

Chapter 23, Spinal Cord Injury

Chapter 24, Pressure Sores

Chapter 25, Urine and Bowel Management: With Spinal Cord Injury and Spina Bifida (includes Urinary Infections)

Chapter 26, Leprosy

Chapter 27, Amputations

Chapter 28, Burns and Burn Deformities

Chapter 29, Fits: Epilepsy

Chapter 30, Blindness and Difficulty Seeing

Chapter 31, Deafness and Communication

Chapter 32, Mental Retardation: Down Syndrome, Cretinism, and Other Causes

Chapter 33, The Child with Several Severe Disabilities

C. Helping the Child Whose Mind and/or Body are Slow to Develop

Chapter 34, Child Development and Developmental Delay

Chapter 35, Early Stimulation and Development Activities

1) Head Control and Use of Senses

2) Rolling and Twisting

3) Gripping, Reaching, and Hand-eye Coordination
4) Body Control, Sitting, and Balance
5) Creeping and Crawling
6) Standing, Walking, and Balance
7) Communication and Speech
8) Early Play Activities and Toys

D. Helping Children Develop and Become More Self-reliant

- Chapter 36. Feeding
- Chapter 37. Dressing
- Chapter 38. Toilet Training
- Chapter 39. Bathing (includes Care of the Teeth and Gums)
- Chapter 40. Ways to Improve Learning and Behavior
- Chapter 41. ‘Learning Disabilities’ in Children with Normal Intelligence

E. Exercises and Techniques

- Chapter 42. Range-of-motion and Other Exercises
- Chapter 43. Crutch Use, Cane Use, and Wheelchair Transfers

PART 2. WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY:

Village Involvement in the Rehabilitation, Social Integration, and Rights of Disabled Children

- Chapter 44. Introduction to PART 2: Disabled Children in the Community
- Chapter 45. Starting Village-based Rehabilitation Activities
- Chapter 46. Playgrounds for All Children
- Chapter 47. CHILD-to-child: Helping Teachers and Children Understand Disabled Children
- Chapter 48. Popular Theater
- Chapter 49. A Children’s Workshop for Making Toys
- Chapter 50. Organization, Management, and Financing of a Village Rehabilitation Program
- Chapter 51. Adapting the Home and Community to the Needs of the Disabled
- Chapter 52. Love, Sex, and Social Adjustment
- Chapter 53. Education: At Home, at School, at Work
- Chapter 54. Work: Possibilities and Training
- Chapter 55. Examples of Community-Directed Programs

PART 3. WORKING IN THE SHOP:

Rehabilitation Aids and Procedures

- Chapter 56. Introduction to PART 3: Making Sure Aids and Procedures Do More Good than Harm
- Chapter 57. A ‘Shop for Making Aids’ Run by Disabled Villagers
- Chapter 58. Braces (Calipers)
- Chapter 59. Correcting Joint Contractures (with casts or braces)
- Chapter 60. Correcting Club Feet (with tape or plaster casts)
- Chapter 61. Homemade Casting Materials
THANKS

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The Hesperian Foundation

This book is divided into 3 parts.
PART 1: WORKING WITH THE CHILD AND FAMILY (Chapters 1 to 42)

This is the longest part of the book, divided into 5 sections:

Section A (Chapters 2 to 5): ideas for sharing information from the book; and background information on working with disabled children

Section B (Chapters 6 to 33): detailed information on specific disabilities

Section C (Chapters 34 and 35): on the child who is slow to learn and to develop

Section D (Chapters 36 to 41): on helping disabled children become more self-reliant

Section E (Chapters 42 and 43): on learning specific exercises; includes techniques for using crutches, canes, and wheelchairs

PART 2: WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY (Chapters 44 to 55)

ideas for starting a community program, and for helping the community respond to the needs of disabled children

PART 3: WORKING IN THE SHOP (Chapters 56 to 67)

suggestions for setting up a workshop and for making aids, wheelchairs, braces, and rehabilitation equipment

LOOKING UP PAGE REFERENCES

Usually the chapter that discusses a specific disability will not include all the information necessary to meet a child's needs. You will also have to look in other chapters. There are several ways to find out where to look.

As you read a chapter, often you will come to page references such as "(See Page 471)." This means that you can turn to page 471 for more information on the topic being discussed.

To find all the different places in the book that give important information about a specific disability or topic, use the INDEX.

In some chapters, where further reading is essential, there is a list of references to other parts of the book at the end of the chapter. (See, for example, Page 75.)

It is very important that you learn how to look up these references, and do so. If you do not, the information to meet a child's needs will not be complete.

REMEMBER: The best way to learn how to use this book is to work for a while with the guidance of experienced rehabilitation workers.

Ways to make therapy fun and useful.
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<th>Toy making.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Playgrounds for all children.</td>
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<td>Low-cost aids.</td>
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Disabled Village Children is a book of information and ideas for all who are concerned about the well-being of disabled children. It is especially for those who live in rural areas where resources are limited. But it is also for therapists and professionals who assist community-based programs or who want to share knowledge and skills with families and concerned members of the community.

Written by David Werner with the help of disabled persons and pioneers in rehabilitation in many countries, this book has been prepared in a style and spirit similar to the author's earlier works, Where There Is No Doctor and Helping Health Workers Learn. It gives a wealth of clear, simple, but detailed information concerning most common disabilities of children: many different physical disabilities, blindness, deafness, fits, behavior problems, and developmental delay. It gives suggestions for simplified rehabilitation, low-cost aids, and ways to help disabled children find a role and be accepted in the community.

Above all, the book helps us to realize that most of the answers for meeting these children's needs can be found within the community, the family, and in the children themselves. It discusses ways of starting small community rehabilitation centers and workshops run by disabled persons or the families of disabled children.

Over 4,000 line drawings and 200, photos help make the information clear even to those with little formal education.

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Disabled Village Children is a powerful, engaging, and readable reference for (developing world) health and rehabilitation workers. It provides ideas and techniques relevant for the novice and the veteran, as well as for the interested observer. The power of Disabled Village Children derives from its simplicity as well as from its recurring theme of a “bottom-up” approach to health and rehabilitation in rural communities. - -Marc Krizack, Rehabilitation Consciousness.
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