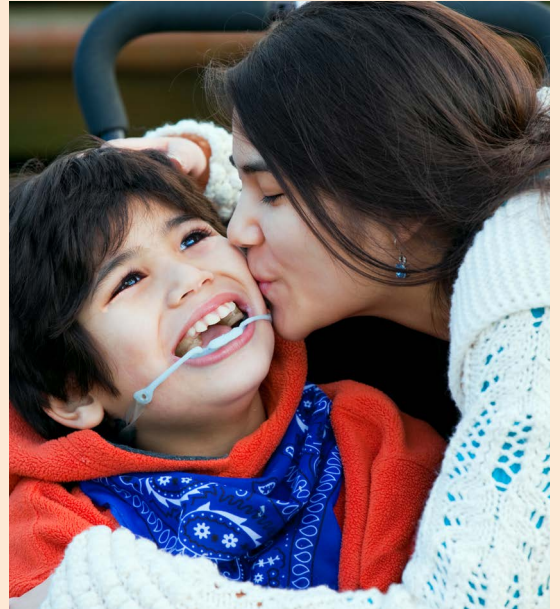


TOP5 for Children with Special Needs

TOP5 helps care staff to be aware of your child's communication abilities, signs, likes, dislikes, routines and rituals.



What is TOP5?

As a carer and parent, no one knows your child as well as you do. You hold the key to understanding their communication and behaviour.

You know their personality, their 'must haves', and its meaning to them. You know their likes and dislikes, interests, fears, routines, rituals and triggers. You also know how to soothe and comfort them.

TOP5 is a tool to assist care workers to better understand the individual needs of your child. The unique and specific care tips you provide, help staff when working with, and assisting your child.



What should I write?

Share the five most important things you think care workers and hospital staff need to know when caring for your child. It may involve some tips and strategies:

- to keep your child reassured and settled.
- to gain co-operation with staff.
- to encourage communication.
- to engage your child in activities.

Each strategy should include what action the staff need do, or not do, why, and what will be the likely outcome.

Consider:

- situations that cause distress
- signs or actions that indicate a need
- routines and rituals
- 'must haves' or comforters
- preferred activities, books, games, toys.

If the child is non-English speaking, you could create a Picture Communication book to assist staff with communication, or download one from www.easternhealth.org.au/site/item/152-cue-cards-in-community-languages



Health
Central Coast
Local Health District

Your tips and strategies for care are called the TOP5

Examples of Carer Tips:

Jack has a unique sign for YES: He taps his head with a closed hand.
Father

Katie cannot feed herself. She will not allow you to feed her until she holds a spoon in her hand. Mother

Ryan clicks his tongue when he is thirsty, and he squeals when he smells food. Brother

Felix must have his 'mobile' with him at all times, or he will scream and kick. He has it under his pillow when he sleeps. Sister

Lucy can't tolerate strangers looking at her. When talking to her pretend to be looking at something else. When she is ready she will look at you and then you may look at her. Otherwise she will throw anything she gets her hands on. Mother



FURTHER INFORMATION

Staff at the **Carer Support Unit** can help you with your TOP5.

Call us on **4320 5556** or drop into the **Carer Retreat** 91 Holden Street, Gosford (opposite Gosford Hospital)

For more information visit our web page at www.cclhd.health.nsw.gov.au

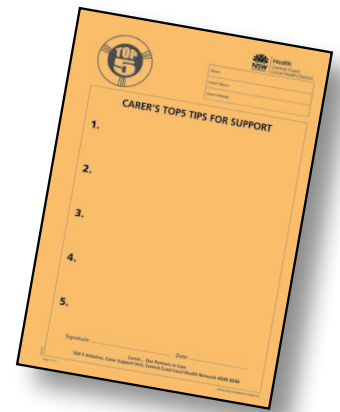
The Carer Support Unit is listed under the Patients and Visitors heading.

How does it work?

Write your tips and strategies for care on the TOP5 form 'Carer's TOP5 Tips For Support'.

A copy of the TOP5 form could be supplied to all support workers who provide a service for you and your child e.g. school, transport, therapy, respite. If your child is likely to be hospitalised regularly you could keep a copy in a pre-packed 'hospital bag'.

As your child's abilities and interests change, regularly review the TOP5 to ensure that the tips and strategies are still relevant and effective in supporting your child.



TOP5 in Hospital

When your child goes to hospital, take a copy of the TOP5 with you. If an ambulance is required, a copy of the TOP5 could be given to the paramedic. They will use it while they are caring for your child and will hand it on to emergency department staff.

Discuss your care tips with nursing staff. They will adapt your TOP5 so that it will work for your child while they are in hospital.

The Hospital TOP5 form will be placed on the bed chart and be available to all clinical staff.

