

## Independent Travel Training Suggested Steps

- Look at the route you need to walk and assess any risks like places to cross etc, make sure there is a path and bus stop is a safe place to stand and wait, also ensure it is well lit. The shortest route is not necessarily the safest. Perhaps train on days in the holiday when it is a little quieter at first, the route will be familiar after that and there might be less to distract or worry. If possible try and choose a route with dedicated crossing.
- Make some 'Health and Safety' rules, this also gives a different feel as it then could be a 'lesson' (e.g. no running, always stop at the roadside to look, or any other rules you may wish to put in place relevant, have your **mobile: emergency contacts, charged up and with credit on- very important!!**)
- Make a note of how long it takes to walk to the bus stop; when the bus is due; what time it actually comes (each time could be different!!); then how long the journey is; and the same with the walk to school from the bus stop. These are helpful as they can be kept discretely and looked at for reassurance.
- Show bus pass and state destination each time (first time, stand to one side and tell the driver you are teaching travel training, then ask the young person to show pass and state destination)
- Try to sit where the front windscreen is visible, usually on the left. Look out the window, and when the journey is learned, perhaps listen to some music on iPod - but never walk around with earphones in or traffic cannot be heard. - make it a Health and Safety rule! Adult rules are good to make too; do not stare at people or look at them if they are going through bags etc. Understandably this is a novelty and it will wear off, but make some adult rules specific to the young person. This will give good boundaries.
- Look for landmarks to get ready to press the bell to stop (unless going into the bus station) - this also makes the journey more interesting.
- Always say thank you to the driver.
- When you have done this and you both feel confident, let the young person 'lead' the way: walking to the bus, crossing any roads and **only if a danger** would you say anything. (talking to them when they are concentrating is not a good idea, especially if they are easily distracted. Always do this at a time when they can relax a little). Then lead onto bus and rest of journey in stages.
- Weaning off: When confident, then you could **meet at** the bus stop, next meet **ON** the bus (get on one stop before or after, but do not sit with him/her - let them lead to get off again) then meet at the bus stop/station, then at the school. Depending on where you walk is how you wean, you know your young person the best. If a walk is a good distance, then think about making it into an extra 'stage' so you meet on route to the bus stop.
- When all the journey has been done by this 'shadowing' then do the journey following in the car.
- Then lastly, meet at the school, or at home on the return.