

Say Hello!

Sighted Guide

A person who lives with low vision may need assistance to move through an environment safely and efficiently, with the assistance of a sighted person – their guide. This is known as sighted guiding.

It is important to be mindful that not everybody who lives with low vision may require or want assistance. Even if you think they do.

When sighted guiding, guides should use the 'Three A's':

Approach

- Address the person.
- Identify yourself and state your role.

Ask

- Always ask if assistance is needed in the first place.
- Find out what assistance they required.

Assist

- Describe what you see around you – objects and where they are located; advise of any changes in layout of furniture, etc.
- Use precise, descriptive terms, for example, 'the door is on your left' rather than 'the door is over there'.
- Look ahead and advise on upcoming obstacles – at the foot level, head height and to the side.

Tips on Technique:

- The person being guided should lightly grip the back of the guide's arm, above the elbow. This offers comfort and safety.
- Walk at a comfortable pace. The guide should be one step ahead at all times, to offer protection.
- Doorways – it is important to allow the person being guided to be in control of the door; they should be on the hinge side.

- Narrow spaces – advise the person that a narrow space is ahead.
- Stairs – stop at the first step and tell the person you are guiding whether the steps go up or down. Stop when you reach the end of the stairs and tell the person you are at the top or bottom.
- Seating – explain which way the chair is facing and where it is placed in relation to the rest of the room. Also explain which part of the chair you are touching.
- If leaving the person alone, leave them in contact with an object.

Say hello!

When you see someone using a long cane, or any mobility device, please say hello, and behave just as you would around anyone else.

We're all different and unique. These differences might mean some additional support is required, but embracing diversity, understanding another's perspective, and caring about the people in our community is something to be celebrated.

Thank you for helping create a supportive and engaging community, and a greater sense of belonging for everyone.

