

# Crelling Harnesses for Disabled Ltd.

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## Usage of Walking Rein Policy

Our walking reins are designed to help guide and control children and adults with challenging behaviour or learning difficulties when out walking with a Carer.

The aim of our walking reins is to enhance the individual's quality of life by enabling them to safely continue enjoying day to day activities within the community whilst retaining a degree of social independence. Our walking reins reduce the risk of injury to the patient and also to members of the public, which may be incurred if the patient has no awareness of danger and is a flight risk.

Social interaction is vital to many special needs individuals for continual development and is also important to their parents / carers as a means of fun, quality time spent with the individual, but also for the carer to receive support from others. Without access to an aid to safely transport the individual to a set location i.e. the local park / day trip, individuals may be excluded from these activities and many parents /carers would become reliant on others for transport and in some cases home bound - this would be detrimental to the individual and the parent/ carer.

If a decision is made to use a walking rein from our range we would recommend that you perform your own risk assessment to firstly determine if a rein is needed and secondly to determine which type in our range would be most beneficial to the individual concerned. We are happy to give advice over the phone if help is required when selecting a harness.

When risk assessments are performed, we would recommend considering not only the risks to the SEN individual, but also to both staff and members of the public.

A common sense approach should be adopted when matching carers with SEN adults requiring walking reins. If necessary a 2:1 ratio may need to be put into place and a walking rein with handling loops at each side rather than the standard rein may need to be used.

**NB: Schools should check with their local councils / governing bodies to see if there are any set policies / risk assessments already in place that they need to adhere to in relation to the use of walking reins.**

**Permission should be obtained from the legal parent or guardian of children prior to use. In some instances where the child is under social services, a best interest meeting may be required prior to permission being given.**

- We would recommend the use of the Chest Padded Walking Rein in cases of severe challenging behaviour or where the individual is known for propelling themselves forward.
- It is important for safety reasons that the rein strap is always held behind the child and not pulled from the front. This ensures the strain is on the very strong webbing belts and not on the PVC chest pad.
- Some individuals can undo the handling rein attachment of the walking reins and this may lead to them absconding on an outing.

**It is important when selecting a walking rein to take this into consideration.**

It is possible to request a 'Fixed' rein from us, where the handling rein is non detachable.

Some clients prefer to be able to detach the handling rein at times, but also need it secured when walking.

- Our walking reins are designed to be used under supervision at all times and should only be used under the supervision of a responsible adult. Children and adults wearing the reins should never be left unattended.
- The walking rein should be the appropriate size for the individual and be fitted correctly ensuring it is a snug fit, but not too tight as to cause discomfort /injury. The pinch test on the webbing can be adopted to ensure the harness is not too loose. When fastening the walking rein care should be taken to ensure that no clothing is caught in between the buckles. An audible “click” should be heard when fastening the black Side Squeeze buckles.
- The rein should be checked regularly for damage to both components and webbing. If damage or fraying occurs the harness should not be used and should be replaced immediately.
- Walking reins should be used for the duration of an outing as required, but should not be used unnecessarily or for long periods of time once the individual is back within a safe environment where the flight risk has been eliminated. i.e. home / school.
- If the individual is in an enclosed area. i.e. park and the carer is not keeping hold of the reins, the handling rein should be either fully detached or securely tied up so it does not pose a tripping risk to the individual.
- The walking reins are made of polyester webbing and a PVC sleeve / pad. For usage during hot summer months it is important to ensure the individual does not become overheated wearing the harness as this may become uncomfortable.  
**The carer should check the individual regularly during use.**
- We recommend, where possible, that when crossing roads the carer holds onto both the walking rein and the individual's hand.
- Our walking reins are designed to help gently guide individuals when out walking, they should not be used roughly to drag or pull back an individual as this may cause the wearer to fall and injure themselves.  
**Carers will need to use discretion on this point as there are emergency circumstances where it may need to be overruled. i.e. the individual is heading in front of a moving vehicle.**
- When the walking reins are not in use, we strongly recommend that they are stored safely out of both children’s and SEN individuals reach. Ideally they should be stored so that the webbing does not cause a tripping / choking hazard.
- When storing walking reins please ensure that the PVC chest pad / sleeve is laid flat and not folded over. This may create creasing of the chest pad material which in turn may cause chaffing to the occupant.
- We would advise people who are suffering from existing wrist / arm injuries not to use the walking reins with SEN individuals, as further injury may be sustained.