

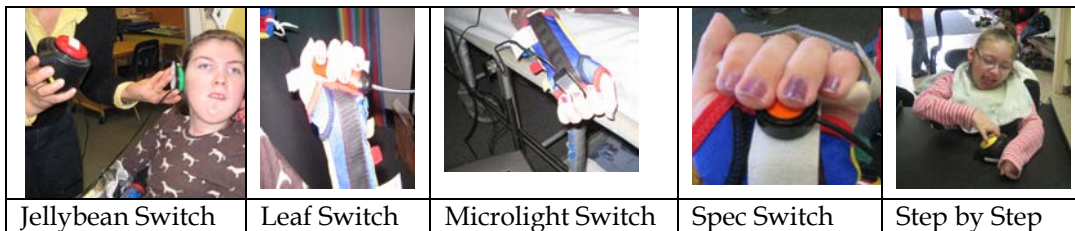
SWITCH CONSIDERATIONS

SUMMARY

Switch use is a desired goal for many our students as it provides those with limited hand function, the opportunity to be more of an active participant. However, we need to consider if our student is able and ready to use a switch. Also, we as helpers need to consider when to introduce a switch to our students. The following are some considerations with regards to these questions.

1. Properties Of A Switch Include

- Size of the switch
- Motivation (e.g., what type of sensory information is this switch giving your student?)
- Sensitivity (e.g., how much pressure does your student need to 'hit the switch'?)
- Operating mode (e.g., what am I expecting my student to do with the switch?)
- Durability (e.g., can the switch withstand your student's 'handling' of it?)
- Transportability (e.g., where will the switch go during the day?)
- Weight of the switch (e.g., does it make a difference to my student or the mounting system?)
- Cost (e.g., can we afford this?)



2. Your Student's Physical Skills

Your student's physical abilities will dictate which type of switch to use.

Some questions to ask yourself include:

- Can the student touch a switch and release it?
- Can my student use movement that...
 - is voluntary both on and off - often the latter is the more difficult
 - is repeatable
 - is easy/energy efficient, and
 - reduces or eliminates minimal or accidental hits
- What are my student's sensory needs?
(e.g., the type of surface on the switch can have an impact with regards to how s/he uses or activates the switch)

3. Your Student's Motivation To Use The Switch




What is the switch doing for your student that s/he enjoys? How can you as the helper make the switch more motivating and meaningful to your student? (Include a variety of the student's motivators into every switch activity.)

4. Does Your Student Understand Cause And Effect?

Does your student understand that hitting the switch ("cause") leads to the outcome ("effect" or activation of the attached appliance). If your student has the physical ability to access a switch, we need to factor in the student's motivation and use of repetition within a variety of different situations to reinforce cause/effect.

5. Consistency In Placement Of The Switch Is Essential

Switch Access should include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Position of the student	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type of switch	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Position of the switch	

Refer to example of switch use by viewing the following video:

http://www.pisp.ca/strategies/MVI_knockknockjoke.avi