



The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)

Annual Accessibility Report

2025

SickKids®

Table of contents

| | |
|--|----------|
| 1. About SickKids 2025 Annual Accessibility Report | 3 |
| Do you need this report in an alternative format?..... | 3 |
| 2. 2022–2024 Accessibility Plan extended through 2026 | 3 |
| 3. Accessibility milestones..... | 4 |
| Accessibility Barrier Assessment | 4 |
| Accessibility training | 4 |
| Engage with people with disabilities | 5 |
| Explore assistive devices to support phone calls..... | 5 |
| Increase awareness of accessible washroom locations | 5 |
| Investigate ways to improve accessibility in waiting rooms | 5 |
| Improve the accommodations process for students and learners | 5 |
| 4. Supporting disability inclusion at SickKids | 6 |
| Project SEARCH..... | 6 |
| SickKids partnership with Ontario Corporate Training Centre (OCTC) | 6 |
| Celebrating National AccessAbility Week 2025..... | 6 |
| Family Centre refresh | 7 |
| Disability inclusive books donated to the Family Centre | 7 |
| Observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities..... | 7 |
| Advocacy at SickKids Education Showcase | 7 |
| 5. Contact us..... | 7 |

About SickKids 2025 Annual Accessibility Report

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) prepares an annual accessibility report as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). This report highlights progress made on implementing the SickKids Accessibility Plan between November 2024 and December 2025, as well as other efforts that support an accessible and inclusive environment.

Do you need this report in an alternative format?

Contact Accessibility at SickKids by emailing accessibility.questions@sickkids.ca, calling 416-813-7654 extension 228315 or completing the [Alternative Format Request Form](#).

2022–2024 Accessibility Plan extended through 2026

In 2025, SickKids evaluated the progress of the 2022–2024 Accessibility Plan and chose to extend it through 2026. It is now known as the 2022–2026 Accessibility Plan. This extension allows continued advancement of accessibility initiatives and supports the creation of the next multi-year accessibility plan, which will be aligned with the [SickKids 2030 Strategy](#).

The decision to extend the accessibility plan was made with input from the Accessibility Steering Committee, initiative leads, and the Accessibility, Access and Inclusion Employee Resource Group. These groups include representation from people with lived experience of disability.

The 2022–2026 Accessibility Plan is available at [Accessibility on SickKids.ca](#).

Accessibility milestones

SickKids continued to make progress on implementing the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan. The following section highlights milestones achieved in 2025.

Accessibility Barrier Assessment

In 2025, SickKids completed an Accessibility Barrier Assessment (needs assessment) to gain insights into accessibility barriers experienced by people with disabilities when accessing care, accommodations, services, programs, and facilities at SickKids. AODA defines an accessibility barrier as: “Anything that prevents a person with a disability from participating in all aspects of society because of their disability.”

How was the barrier assessment done?

The barrier assessment included:

- An AODA compliance audit
- A review of accessibility data and feedback collected between 2022 and 2024.
- Engagement with the SickKids community (patients, families, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors) through 3 focus groups, 3 interviews, and an accessibility survey which received 267 responses.

Findings were analyzed and common themes were reviewed with the Patient Advisory Council (formerly the Children’s Council), the Barrier Assessment Working Group, and the Accessibility Steering Committee for feedback and validation.

Limitations

This assessment provided a snapshot in time and may not include every barrier or perspective.

How will we use what we learned?

Insights from this assessment will guide the development of SickKids’ next multi-year accessibility plan for 2026–2030.

Acknowledgements

The assessment was led by the Accessibility Specialist. Members of the Accessibility Barrier Assessment Working Group, including individuals with lived experience of disability, students, leaders, and employees from across SickKids, supported the scoping of the assessment and provided input throughout the process. The Enterprise Data & Analytics Office supported analysis, and the Accessibility Steering Committee provided oversight.

Accessibility training

Existing mandatory accessibility training modules were reviewed and updated. A new accessibility training module from another hospital is being adapted for use at SickKids with the goal of streamlining accessibility training.

Engage with people with disabilities

A new onboarding process and policy for the Lived Experience Network (Formerly the Family Advisory Network) has been finalized, helping to enable efforts to engage people with lived experience of disability.

Explore assistive devices to support phone calls

Occupational Health and Safety Services explored devices and equipment that may support employees, learners, and volunteers with hearing disabilities with phone calls and created an internal guide outlining potential options, sourcing information, and support tips to support accommodation requests for employees, learners, and volunteers.

Increase awareness of accessible washroom locations

Signage in the main hospital was updated to help patients, families, and visitors find universal washrooms with an adult-sized change table and a lift more easily.

- Universal washroom signage in the main hospital was updated.
- Digital screens in the main hospital state where universal washrooms are located and provide a QR code to access the hospital map.
- Physical directional signage is being piloted near washrooms located along a high traffic path of travel on the main floor of the Black Wing. These signs also state where to find universal washrooms and include contact information for the Hospital Concierge Team.

Investigate ways to improve accessibility in waiting rooms

- The Facilities Project Management Office engaged the SickKids community and conducted a study to assess comfort needs in waiting areas. This included trialing various layouts and comfort seating options to better support children and families, including those who use mobility aids.
- Recommendations from the study were shared with hospital leadership to inform future improvements in waiting room design and accessibility.

Improve the accommodations process for students and learners

- Occupational Health and Safety Services and the Learning Institute have worked to strengthen the hospital's approach to accommodating students and learners.
- A resource document and process flow diagram were developed to guide staff and learners through the steps for requesting and implementing accommodations.
- The Learner Experience Survey now includes a question on accessibility and accommodation to capture feedback and inform ongoing improvements.

Supporting disability inclusion at SickKids

In addition to implementing the accessibility plan, other initiatives that support an accessible and inclusive environment are highlighted in this section.

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a specialized transition-to-work program designed for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in their final year of high school. It is a licensed program that started at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and now has sites across North America and beyond. It is a collaborative effort between SickKids, the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), and Corbrook Awakening Abilities and is facilitated by a dedicated team comprising of a teacher, two skills trainers, and a SickKids business liaison.

The program serves as a critical pathway to independence and meaningful employment, offering a comprehensive blend of classroom instruction and experiential learning on-site at SickKids. In its inaugural year, Project SEARCH at SickKids is supporting 8 interns, who will spend the 2025-2026 school year completing three 10-week internships. Placements for this year span a variety of departments, including Nutrition Services, Patient Support Services, Commercial Services, and Patient and Family Experience. The objective is securing full-time employment for graduates within six months. The program's global success rate for full-time employment exceeds 70%, significantly outperforming the Canadian average of 26%. The program is a key enabler of creating a disability-confident, inclusive and diverse workforce at SickKids.

SickKids partnership with Ontario Corporate Training Centre (OCTC)

SickKids has strengthened its commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion through a strategic partnership with the Ontario Corporate Training Centre (OCTC), part of the Ontario Disability Employment Network. This collaboration focuses on disability-inclusive hiring practices and workforce education. Over the past year, SickKids Human Resources staff completed more than 30 online training modules designed to build confidence and awareness among staff, covering topics for HR professionals, managers, and teams. As a result, SickKids gained access to OCTC's Jobs Ability platform, enabling us to post all of our job opportunities at no cost for one year. This initiative reflects our dedication to creating an accessible and inclusive workplace while fostering meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Celebrating National AccessAbility Week 2025

SickKids celebrated National AccessAbility Week in May by promoting accessibility and inclusion across our community. The Accessibility Steering Committee shared resources to support an inclusive workplace. The Accessibility, Access and Inclusion Employee Resource Group joined patient and family programs like Story Time and provided prizes for an accessibility-themed Kahoot (online quiz).

Family Centre refresh

The SickKids Family Centre and Library were redesigned to create a more welcoming and functional space for patients, families, and visitors. The refresh introduced flexible seating, height-adjustable workstations, vibrant reading nook, and easier navigation for those using mobility devices. These updates not only enhance comfort and usability but also support greater accessibility for everyone.

Disability inclusive books donated to the Family Centre

To mark Disability Pride Month, the Accessibility, Access and Inclusion Employee Resource Group donated a selection of disability-inclusive books to the SickKids Family Centre Library. The collection includes titles that promote representation and understanding of diverse abilities, along with accessible formats including Braille books and games.

Observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

To observe the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in December, the Accessibility, Access and Inclusion Employee Resource Group joined patient and family programs including Story Time and Kahoot (online quiz).

Advocacy at SickKids Education Showcase

At the SickKids Education Showcase, hosted by the Learning Institute, SickKids' Accessibility Specialist delivered a presentation highlighting accessibility initiatives, resources, and practical steps to help reduce barriers and support a more inclusive environment at SickKids.

Contact us

Have questions about this report or feedback about accessibility at SickKids?

Email accessibility.questions@sickkids.ca or call 416-813-7654 extension 228315.