

Sensory Toys & Assistive Resources Service

STAR

The **Sensory Toys and Assistive Resources Service (STAR)** offers a free lending collection of toys and technologies with a range of sensory spaces and services in all public libraries in County Wexford, Ireland. This service enables people living with challenges to participate in activities, to learn and develop skills and to grow personally.

In 2019 Wexford County Council Public Library Service consulted with healthcare professionals, educators and advocacy groups to design a sensory collection, STAR for loan.

They selected educational toys, assistive software and technology items, equipment, and digital literacy resources to support development of **gross motor skills, fine motor skills, speech, language and social skills, play and life skills, sensory and tactile skills.**

The items selected are listed in the Sensory Toys and Assistive Resources catalogue. The STAR collection contains 175 toys and assistive resources and 1170 multisensory online courses. The licences include Touch-type Read and Spell, Nessy Reading and Spelling, and Reading Eggs. The collection, with a catalogue of resources and a dedicated web presence, was launched in 2021.



In 2020 Wexford Public Library Service with support from the Department of Rural and Community Development Dormant Accounts Fund provided additional sensory spaces and services in all five libraries. Magic interactive light projection tables are available in two libraries and are widely used by children and adults with extra needs. Library staff received training in awareness of extra needs and the STAR resources, and in making the library buildings accessible



A **STAR CARD** is freely available to library members who can reserve and borrow items in the STAR collection from all County Wexford libraries.



Sensory toys support the development of children and young people through the use of objects, lighting, and music. They can be of benefit to persons who have limited communication skills.

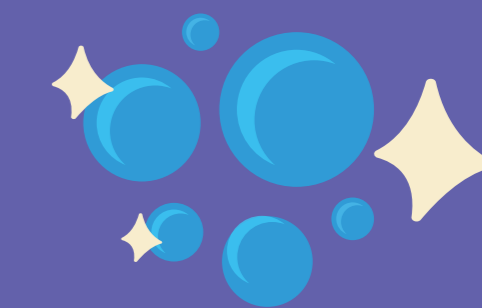


A **Sensory Pod** provides a calming space within the library with a mood light ceiling and Bluetooth audio to support stress reduction. It is a fun, relaxing space and is useful for both children and adults with sensory needs.

Assistive resources are items, equipment, and technology that enable a person to develop and improve their functional capabilities, to carry out specific tasks and activities.



Assistive software to support learning is downloaded on licence and can be used at home, in the classroom or in the library on the public access computers by arrangement.



Collection Management

Library staff manage the daily use of the collection; issues, returns and sanitising. Each year new items are added, reviewed, withdrawn and deep cleaned. Health and safety guidelines have been developed to support the use of the sensory collection, activity walls, Pods and garden.

175

Items in Collection

275

Sensory Toy Loans

840

Users

1170

Licensed Apps (literacy licences)

4936

Hours

21,216

Sessions

5^{1/2}

Hours

24

Sessions

7 months

toys & assistive resources

1 year

online literacy courses

Average User

Promotion

The service is promoted to families, schools, childcare centres, community groups and professional bodies. Promotion is also done via our website, social media, and at medical venues.

Why provide a STAR Collection and Sensory Services?

Libraries are more accessible to persons with diverse needs and offer an enhanced and inclusive experience. The library is providing services and resources free to users, removing the financial burden from a disadvantaged group. New members join libraries to avail of the sensory loan collection, facilities and services. Members and professionals know that our libraries are accessible places holding special resources. Library staff are aware of the needs of persons with sensory and learning disabilities. With STAR the service can harness new technologies to bring this client group to libraries.

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CATALOGUE HERE



www.wexfordcoco.ie



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Government of Ireland

ciste na
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the dormant
accounts fund



Comhairle Contae
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