

# SMART Walker™ Orthosis

## Use and Care Guidelines for Parents

**IMPORTANT: Due to the complex nature of this device and the child using it, you MUST be trained by your orthotist or therapist on the proper application of the SMART Walker before attempting to use it with a child.**

### Safety Issues

- Sharp objects (particularly at face level) should be removed.
- Furniture where the frame can slip under should be moved or the openings should be blocked.
- Open stairwells, curbs, ledges, hills and ramps are all areas of possible risk—stay away.
- The child should NEVER use the walker unsupervised.

### Before Placing the Child into the Brace—PRACTICE!

- Practice taking the brace out of the frame. You will notice that a straight lift is required to get the brace to slide out of the catch on the wheeled frame.
- Practice attaching the brace into the frame. Make sure that the brace has engaged fully into the frame catch.
- Practice attaching the boots onto the brace. There are two clips that need to match up into the slots before you can tighten the screw. Also, make sure that the brace is as close to the boot as it can be.

### Putting the Shoes on

- Put the shoes on the child, ensuring the toes do not curl while going into the shoe.
- These special shoes have a very long tongue so open them well. Tie laces securely.

### Placing the Child into the Brace

- Lay the brace, face up, on the floor mat or padded table. Undo all the straps and drape them out of the way.
- Lay the child over the brace. Keep an eye on one part of the brace and the child, which you know must line up. For example, the child's hip joint and the hip joint of the brace should line up. Use this as a guide.
- Once the child is lying in the correct position within the brace, fit the shoe clips into their brace slots.

**NOTE:** Most kids are in a toe-down position and it is difficult to bend the ankle upwards. In this situation, you will find that bending the child's knee and hip will allow the toe to lift quite easily. The securing screw is turned with the twist knob (or hex key) to keep the shoe attached to the brace.

- When both shoes are secured, fasten the knee straps and waist belt.

### **Placing the Braced Child into the Frame (2 People Recommended when Lifting)**

- Facing the child, wrap your arm that is closest to the child under their arm pit, and grab onto the rear pelvic bar.
- Lift the child into the frame and engage the brace into the catch as you lower them to the floor. Always ensure that the brace is fully engaged into the suspension unit clip.  
**NOTE:** Do remember your back and your lifting technique. You should hold the child close to you with your feet apart, lowering the child into the frame by bending your knees.
- Clip the front and rear straps to the ends of the rings on each leg of the brace.

### **Helping the Child to Take Steps**

- Provide a smooth and flat surface for the child to walk on.
- If the child is having difficulty taking a step, stand behind the child, take hold of the brace thigh steels and gently lift the child's foot just clear of the floor. Move the thighs and legs in a slow-walking action for a minute or so, to allow the child to feel the movement of the brace. Then, lower the child to the floor and invite them to try again. DO NOT be tempted to take the child's hand and start "helping" by pulling them along; they may lose all motivation.

### **Steering the Frame**

- This requires the child to turn their head and shoulders in the desired direction while taking steps.
- If the child cannot do this, place one hand on the sidebars located on the child's back and one hand on the front of the frame. Tip the child backwards just until their feet clear the floor and then turn the frame. DO NOT turn the frame while the child's feet are on the floor because you may damage the frame by bending it.

### **Removal from Frame and Brace**

- Removal from the frame and the brace is essentially the reverse of the lifting process. Be sure to unclip the guidance straps before lifting the child and ensure proper lifting techniques.

PLACE COMPANY INFORMATION BELOW

