



PARENT SUPPORT GROUP AFFILIATION SCHEME

If you're reading this, you're probably involved with running a parent support group. At Contact we know how invaluable parent support groups are – families tell us how much they rely on groups like yours. We also know it takes skill and dedication to run a support group, so we've designed a range of services to help your group run successfully, and meet your needs. Our scheme is open to support groups across the UK.

We know that, like us, you're committed to making life better for families. By teaming up we can reach more families and be there for them sooner. We have nearly four decades' experience of working with parent support groups. We hope this scheme will help us work more closely together for the families we both serve – something you've told us you want more of. We would like to thank you for choosing to affiliate with Contact. Working together, we can reach families as soon as they need us.



WHY AFFILIATE WITH US?



OUR SCHEME GIVES YOU:

The information, news and resources to help your group grow and thrive.

Support in promoting your group, reaching new members and networking with each other.

Learning and development opportunities – that are simple, relevant and great value.

*“It is great to belong to a network – knowing I can tap into the expertise of others who have been there before me is a great comfort and gives me faith that I can do this too!” **Parent support group, Lincoln.***



BENEFITS OF AFFILIATION

We’ve been helping parent support groups for nearly 40 years. Our Affiliation Scheme draws on our experience and offers a number of benefits to help you and your members.

Help to start and grow your support group – our Group Action Pack (our information pack for groups) is full of ideas, tips and specialist advice if you are starting or running a parent support group – such as publicity, fundraising and how to attract members.

Help to promote your group and reach new members – we’ll signpost families to you. You can also use our Online Community to reach new members – we’ll give you a special badge so that parents using the Community can see you are connected to us. And we will also share your videos to other Affiliates and parent carers through our Support Groups YouTube channel.

News, information and exclusive services for you and your members

As an Affiliate you'll have the choice to receive:

- ***Our monthly What's New? e-bulletin rounding up key news for families***
- ***Our regular Campaigns bulletin – with tips on how to get involved***

In addition our support groups newsletter will be emailed to you twice a year. You'll also be able to access our new ***Helpful Guide for Families with Disabled Children*** for your members. Our guide is packed with essential information for the parents of a disabled child or a child who has additional needs. It guides parents through what can be a confusing system of support and to more in-depth help and advice on our website and from our helpline.

We'll also let you know when we run our free Parent Support Workshops in your area, giving your members early opportunities to book on.



Learning, development and networking opportunities

To support your training needs, we'll give you access to two e-learning platforms designed to help you run your group, and reach new members. We can also offer up to 25% discount on our training courses for groups and networks.

Support and expertise from our team

– A dedicated enquiry service through our Support Groups Manager and wider staff team, including advice on running your group, delivering your own events, campaigning, and much more.

Working together for families – And finally, as well a special Affiliated badge in our Online Community, you will be able to use our affiliation logo in your own communications and publicity materials, helping you show your connection to us.

Our affiliate badge will help identify you to parents using our online community.



Affiliated Support Group

I'm a member of Contact's Affiliated Support Group scheme. Find out [more](#)

[1 person has earned this badge.](#)

We'll give you this special version of our logo to use to show our connection.



OUR AFFILIATION OFFER

We offer a free and a paid Affiliation offer, depending on the range of benefits you would like to access.

FREE AFFILIATION INCLUDES

Help to start and grow your support group:

- Access to our handy *Group Action Pack*

Help to promote your group and reach new members:

- Signposting parents to you via our national helpline and local teams
- Promoting your videos via our dedicated *Support Groups YouTube channel*

News, information and exclusive services for you and your members:

- 3 regular e-bulletins
- Access to our **Helpful Guide for families of disabled children**, our comprehensive companion for all parents caring for a disabled child
- Early notice of our parent workshops for your members
- Use our online community to reach more families

The Affiliate training discount could save you up to £180 on a standard one day course.

PAID AFFILIATION INCLUDES EVERYTHING IN OUR FREE OFFER, PLUS...

Learning, development and networking opportunities:

- Access to our exclusive e-learning platforms
- Up to 25% discount on our training courses

Worth £350!

Access to support and expertise from our staff team:

- A dedicated enquiry and support service through our *Support Groups Manager*

Working together for families – demonstrating our connection:

- Use our brand mark in your own materials

FEES

Paid Affiliation costs £100 annually. We accept payment through our website, supported by WorldPay. You will find a link to pay when you apply online here. If you need advice or tips on how to fundraise to pay for affiliation please see our FAQs overleaf.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I become a free Affiliate?

- Simply fill in our quick online application where you will find out about the merits of joining.
- A Welcome pack will be sent out to you and your group within one month.

How do I become a paid Affiliate?

- Simply fill in our quick online application where you will find out about the merits of joining.
- Your paid Affiliate instruction form contains details of how to pay. You simply proceed to an online payment site Worldpay.
- A Welcome pack will be sent within a month of confirmation of payment.

Are there any particular conditions around how we can use the Contact brand?

As a paid affiliate, we will send you a fixed image that we ask you not to manipulate in any way – including stretching the dimensions, altering the colours or overlaying your own logos. There are situations we ask that you think carefully about when using our brand:

- within your own fundraising materials (you would want to be careful you're not giving the impression you are raising money for Contact, or applying for it with our endorsement)
- in your campaigning (if your objectives or tactics are quite different from our own). We would want to support your campaigns wherever possible though, and not restrict use of our brand unless absolutely necessary. You can contact Una Summerson, our Head of Policy and Public Affairs at una.summerson@contact.org.uk if you are unsure.

I'd like to pay for Affiliation but my group has no money

Our top tip would be to set yourself up with a constitution (a governing document):

- A constitution lays out the aims and rules that your group will be governed by. It is a statement of what your group is going to do and how it is going to do it. It is useful to have in terms of your fundraising drive, mainly because it tells potential funders (so useful to have should you ever wish to raise funds) how you conduct your business and what your group hopes to achieve. Many funders will ask to see your constitution before awarding funding.
- The type of constitution that you adopt will depend upon the legal structure your group takes. This means that you can only write your constitution once you have agreed the structure of your group. You can find more information about legal structures in our Group Action pack guide *What outfit do we need?*
- In England and Wales, the most straightforward way to create your constitution is to use a model constitution. If you are a group without a constitution, and have less than £5,000 in your account (if you have one!) then there is template constitution on our website at www.contact.org.uk/model-constitution to start you off. If your group is registered as a charity in Scotland or as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation you will already have a constitution in place. If not registered, you can find more information about charitable and legal status on the OSCR's website www.oscr.org.uk. You can also download a model constitution document from the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations. In Northern Ireland all groups, no matter what their size or annual income, that work for a charitable purpose must register with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland at www.charitycommissionni.org.uk

You can also find more fundraising ideas in our Group Action Pack guide ***Fundraising for local and national support groups***.

Many businesses will only give money to registered charities, and many members of the public also think that registered charities are more credible than organisations which are not registered. So, don't worry if you don't have enough in your bank account to register with the charities commission – you can enjoy some of the benefits of charitable status by registering with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. So, what are you waiting for?

What are the benefits of accessing your brand?

Many groups have told us that they wish to 'belong' to a national organisation to give them 'kudos'. Using our brand will show you are aligned with our charity's ethos and strengths. Equally we, as a national organisation, wish to feel better connected to you and show our support for your work.

How will you help to promote our group and reach new members?

As an Affiliate we'll keep your contact details up to date across all our projects services, so we can signpost parent carers to you whenever they ask. Affiliates can also use our Online Community to reach and connect with new parents – we'll give you a special badge so that parents can see you are connected to us.

What training packages do you offer?

We have created two e-learning packages one for ALL affiliates and one for paid affiliation:

Package One – e-learning package for all to access:

- ***Disability Matters*** is an e-learning pathway designed to meet the wider needs of those of you running support groups and your members. Topics have been carefully chosen with you in mind. Details for signing up will be with the Welcome pack.
- Access to our Support Groups YouTube channel – videos from you to share with one another on topics chosen by you.

Package Two – for our paid affiliates:

Our 'essentials' package features more than 30 core training modules that may be required when running a support group. Modules include:

- Data Protection
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Equality & Diversity.

Your group is entitled to two e-learner log-ins to Contact's e-learning provider, Roadmap. Unfortunately these cannot be shared. Details of signing up will be in the Welcome pack.

If I'm an existing Local Groups Network (LGN) member will I automatically become an Affiliate?

No – you will need to re-register your details. This is to help us ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for your group. This will help us when signposting families to you, and to make sure we are getting our information and services to you through the right channels.

If you have any further questions please email affiliates@contact.org.uk



FREEPHONE HELPLINE

0808 808 3555

Access to interpreters
helpline@contact.org.uk
www.contact.org.uk

Open 9.30am–5pm Monday to Friday

Our freephone helpline can give advice about any aspect of raising a disabled child, including help in the early years, with finances, education, emotional and practical support.

Contact Head Office
209–211 City Road
London EC1V 1JN

 020 7608 8700

 info@contact.org.uk

 www.contact.org.uk

GUIDES FOR PARENTS

We have a range of free guides for parents, including:

- ***Helping your child's sleep***
- ***Claiming Disability Living Allowance***
- ***Siblings***
- ***Fathers***

All our guides are free to parents who call our helpline, and are free to download.

 [www.cafamily.org.uk/
publicationslist](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/publicationslist)



We are Contact,
the charity for
families with
disabled children.

We support
families, bring
families together
and help families
take action
for others.