



Spring Newsletter 2018 – Welcome to the North West Newsletter!

We are Contact, the charity for families with disabled children. We understand that life with a disabled child brings unique challenges, and we exist to help families feel valued, supported, confident and informed.

Following feedback from parents we have rebranded from 'Contact a Family' to 'Contact' to make the way we look clearer, simpler and more approachable. We remain as committed as ever to providing support, information and advice to families across the country.

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contact

For families
with disabled children

In Contact
NORTH WEST



We hope you find the information in the newsletter useful but if for any reason, you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please email northwest@contact.org.uk and let us know and we will remove you from our mailing list. Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

Contact North West Team

You can e-mail general enquiries to the team at northwest@contact.org.uk or get in touch with individual team members below. **To join our mailing list, please email the northwest email address above.** For information and support please contact:

North West Parent Advisers - Local support and information in relation to bringing up a disabled child and local group information.

- Diane Bridge: diane.bridge@contact.org.uk - 01704 532256
- Lyndsay Regan-Hicks: Lyndsay.regan-hicks@contact.org.uk - 07920 655128

Cumbria Parent adviser - join the Cumbria mailing list, for support in relation to bringing up a disabled child, workshops, information and drop-ins

- Victoria Haughan: victoria.haughan@contact.org.uk - 07432 520844 or 01768 88392

North West Parent Advisor SEND (Special educational needs & disability) - for information about any special educational needs issues or about the SEND workshops

- Noreen Arif: noreen.arif@contact.org.uk - 07458 045709

Regional North West Manager & interim Yorkshire & Humber manager - manages the work of the parent advisors in the North West & Yorkshire & Humber regions, contact if you have an enquiry regarding workshops, information days and events.

- Karen Robinson: karen.robinson@contact.org.uk - 01772 424758

Parent Carer Participation Advisor (North West) - for parent carer participation and help and advice around parent carer forums in the North West

- Kate Hurn: kate.hurn@contact.org.uk - 07458 045 694

Parent Advisor Yorkshire & Humber region SEND - For information and support about any special educational needs issues or about the SEND workshops in Yorkshire

- Karen Hoe: karen.hoe@contact.org.uk - Telephone 07920 654966

Volunteer Parent Representatives- Ruth is a parent of a disabled child and offers peer support and local signposting for parents in the St. Helen's area

- Ruth Card: ruth.card@cafamily.org.uk - 01942 721 323

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Contact would like to thank the Big Lottery Fund for their support of the North West Office regional newsletter
Charity registered in England and Wales (284912) and Scotland (SC039169)





FREE Workshops and Information sessions NW regional offer...

By working together and developing partnerships with other organisations across the North West we can offer a number of *free* workshops and information sessions to parents.

We offer a range of welcoming and informative sessions for parent carers of children with any additional need or disability (with or without a formal diagnosis). We attend support groups, link with Children's centres, parent carer forums, schools and other organisations to offer the following free sessions:

- * Introduction to Contact, about us
- * Difficult behaviours that challenge us
- * General benefits & grants
- * Disability Living Allowance
- * Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- * Confidence – coping at meetings, assertiveness and communication skills
- * Growing up and sexuality- understanding puberty: supporting your child through the change
- * Helping your child to sleep
- * Building resilience, coping & support
- * Supporting brothers & sisters
- * Bullying- awareness and support
- * Growing Up, moving on – supporting the transition from child to adult
- * Special Educational needs & Disability - SEND reforms, EHC plans and legislation

For further information or to book for your group, please contact by email: northwest@contact.org.uk or telephone Karen Robinson 01772 424758

Please note that all sessions are subject to availability and local needs and there is a requirement that a minimum of 8 people attend. *Please note sessions for parents are free where funding permits

North West Contact Sessions, Events & Workshops

Workshops in Sefton

11th April 2018, 10:00am-12:30am - 'Difficult behaviours that challenge us', to increase knowledge, explore strategies and top tips and sources of advice support.

18th April 2018, 10:00am-12:30pm - 'Growing up and sexuality understanding puberty: supporting your child through the change', to explore puberty, changes to expect in your child and relationships. Keeping safe and sources of support.

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North West Contact Sessions, Events & Workshops Continued...

25th April 2018, 10:00am-12:30pm - 'Supporting Brothers and Sisters', to identify the emotional and practical issues affecting siblings, explore a range of methods to support siblings and identify resources and support for siblings.

All sessions will be held at: **Salvation Army Building, 65 Shakespeare Street, Southport, PR8 5AJ**. For further information and to book a place, please contact: Annette Edmondson Parent Carers Forum Email: seftonparentcarerforum@gmail.com

Workshops in Liverpool in partnership with LivPaC

24th April 2018, 6:00pm-8:30pm - 'Growing up and sexuality understanding puberty: supporting your child through the change', this is a free information session aiming to explore and support parents to acquire the confidence and skills to talk to their children about growing up, relationships, sex and sexuality and to recognise where to go for additional information, advice and support.

22nd May 2018, 6:00pm-8:30pm – 'Building resilience, coping & support', this free information session aims to explore stress and develop short and long term strategies to minimise and manage its impact. Identify carers' needs and look at available support and resources.

19th June 2018, 6:30pm-8:30pm – 'Supporting brothers & sisters', to identify the emotional and practical issues affecting siblings, explore a range of methods to support siblings and identify resources and support for siblings.

All sessions will be held at: **LivPaC - Liverpool Parent and Carers Forum, c/o DCLP, 5 Shelmore Drive, Dingle, Liverpool, L8 4YL**. To book onto the LivPaC workshops visit <http://www.livpac.co.uk/index.php/courses>

Information stand

Bolton Parent Carer Consortium: SEND: Your 0-25 Journey, 19th April 2018
– information day for parent carers in Bolton. The event will be held on Thursday 19th April at The Holiday Inn, Higher Bridge Street, Bolton, BL1 2EW and will run from 10:00 – 14:30.



Contact are hosting a stand at this event, if you have booked a place then please come and say hello and see what resources and information we can provide. If you've not yet booked a place please visit <http://www.bpsc.org.uk/event-2018>

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Contact's Hospitals Project in the North West

Contact's parent advisers provide practical and emotional support within hospitals at our information stands. In the North West, we hold information stands at Alder Hey Children's Hospital and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. We can help with any questions parents may be struggling to get answers for including help in the early years, medical and health information, diagnosis, benefits, education and local support.

CONTACT Information stand at Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool in the Atrium
on Thursdays from 10.30am till 2pm on the following dates:

5th April 2018; 19th April 2018,
3rd May 2018; 17th May 2018

CONTACT Information stand at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital in the Atrium
on Tuesdays from 11am till 3.00pm on the following dates:

17th April; 1st May; and 15th May 2018

Relaxed Events

HOME Manchester: Relaxed theatre and cinema events at HOME are for anyone who would welcome watching a film or seeing a theatre performance in a more relaxed environment.

HOME

They have been designed to be friendlier to people with autism spectrum conditions and their families, however they may also be suitable for people with sensory disorders or learning difficulties. We aim to make the events as inclusive as possible so they are open to all, even if you don't need the adjustments we make for relaxed performances and screenings.

To sign up for their relaxed events newsletter to get the latest screenings and performances, visit <https://homemcr.org/accessibility/relaxed-events/> or telephone 0161 228 7621 for more information.



Contact's resources

New parent guides

We know that families can struggle financially, so our new guide to [Money Matters](#) outlines all the financial help you may be entitled to, all in one place.

We have also updated our guides on behaviour and sleep:

[Understanding your child's behaviour](#), looks at why children behave in different ways and how to set the scene for good behaviour, managing specific issues, plus much more.

[Helping your child sleep](#) outlines why sleep can be a problem, how to set good bedtime routines, the sleep cycle and hints tips to stop crying at bedtime and helping your child get a good night's sleep.

Parents can contact our Freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555, email helpline@family.org.uk and ask for a free copy of the latest edition. Or you can download all our free resources at www.contact.org.uk

Our free Helpful Guide for families with disabled children

The helpful guides is our all-in-one book with all the information and help you need to enjoy family life. With our guide, we'll talk you through what can be a confusing system of support. We'll support you to find the best way to help your child. We can help you make sense of any jargon and job titles you'll come across.



We know that new parents of disabled children are frequently overwhelmed with reams of paperwork and piles of pamphlets. That's why we've put everything in one place, but split the guide into easy read sections so you can find advice when you're ready to.

How can I order a copy? If you'd like a copy of our helpful guide, simply [complete our online application form](#) at <https://contact.org.uk/order-your-copy-of-the-helpful-guide-for-families-with-disabled-children/>. We'll send you a copy within a couple of weeks.



Campaigning news

Contact looking for families with experience of Universal Credit roll out

Over the next two months we'll be focusing on [Universal Credit](#) and the impact of its roll out on families with disabled children. We are continuing to campaign for three changes to Universal Credit rules which are unfair to families with disabled children:

- Reverse cuts to the lower disabled child element under Universal Credit, which will see 100,000 families with disabled children worse off by £1,600 each year
- Remove rules that mean Universal Credit is stopped when a disabled child is in hospital for six months
- Remove rules that mean Universal Credit is stopped when a disabled child lives away from home such as in residential school.

We need your help to campaign for these changes!

We are keen to gather experiences of anyone who has been moved onto Universal Credit and experienced a cut to their payments because of the above reasons. If you have been affected and would be willing to share your story, we would love to hear from you. Please email us at press@contact.org.uk

Need help understanding Universal Credit? Visit our [Universal Credit webpage](#) for more information about how Universal Credit is being rolled out and how to make a claim at <https://contact.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns-research/universal-credit/> or ring our Freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555.

Fundraising News- please support us

Save the date! Dinosaur Day 2018

Dinosaurs may be extinct, but the challenges families with disabled children face aren't. Contact's Dinosaur Day fundraiser is back with a roar this year taking place on Tuesday 19th June 2018. Join other Contact supporters in raising money to support families with disabled children when they need it most. Hold a cake sale with a prehistoric theme, organise a Dinosaur dress down day at school, or sponsor your boss to wear a Dinosaur mask for the day.

Get in touch with our fundraising team to register your interest today fundraising@contact.org.uk





Help to Support the New Campaign!

We know from our school transport inquiry that the impact of losing school transport is huge for families. Unfortunately, more and more disabled children are being refused school transport or charged for it, as councils exploit a loophole in the law.

How can it be fair that the law says a young person is expected to be in school or training until 18 but does not have the transport to get there once they turn 16? We are calling on the government to close this loophole for disabled youngsters as they face additional challenges getting to school or college.



Please sign our petition to close the school transport loophole for disabled youngsters
<http://bit.ly/2HxKV2O> #schoolruncrisis

Advice, consultancy service, training and workshops for professionals



As well as supporting families, we help other professionals working with disabled children. We have now launched a menu of products and services for professionals. To find out how our advice, consultancy service, training and workshops can support your work please visit:
<https://www.cafamily.org.uk/professionals/>



Resources

Featured articles in this issue

Lagans Foundation: Lagans's Foundation supply home support volunteers to families homes to help support a child under 5 with a heart defect or feeding issue. Home support workers can offer the child supervised play sessions, assisted feeds, nappy changes, baths, friendship and signposting to extra avenues of support.



Parents gain an extra set of eyes, ears and hands to support where they currently have none or very little extra support with the child. Home support workers also support siblings. Family referrals can come from people such as mum, dad, friend.

For more information visit: <http://lagans.org.uk>



The Muir Maxwell Trust: The Muir Maxwell Trust, a paediatric epilepsy charity, aims to make a difference by providing children and their carers with practical support and by speeding up what can be a frustratingly slow diagnostic process.

The Trust's remit is to provide practical support to children and their families coping with severe epilepsy and to increase awareness and understanding of epilepsy and help remove the stigma associated with the condition. For more information visit <http://www.muirmaxwelltrust.com/home> or phone them on 0131 273 5256.

Carers Trust 4all: Carers Trust 4all is launching a NEW service in Cheshire West and Chester area to support children, aged 8 – 11, with a diagnosis of Aspergers or who are struggling with communication and social skills.

Focussed groups, led by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist, will concentrate on improving key social and communication skills. Social sessions will encourage children to put their new found skills into practice.



If you would like to access the group or for more information; Telephone: 0333 323 1990 OR email: cheshirewest@carerstrust4all.org.uk



Featured articles continued...



ERIC: ERIC is the only charity dedicated to the bowel and bladder health of all children and teenagers in the UK. Our vision is that every child and teenager with a bowel or bladder condition can access support and live free from embarrassment, shame, isolation and fear. Lots of resources for children, help with toilet training.

To Find out more information visit: <https://www.eric.org.uk>

Getting out and about

Disabled Go: Disabled Go is an online disability Accessibility Checker. The website has a vast database of detailed information about the accessibility to a range of places across the UK.



Every facility included on DisabledGo.com has its own access guide, with details of parking, entrances, toilets, together with measurements and photographs. Besides information about physical access the website provides details that people with visual impairments, hearing impairments, autism, dementia, learning disabilities and mental health conditions have asked for too.

To find out more visit <https://www.disabledgo.com>



Liverpool Law Clinic: University of Liverpool Law Clinic has launched a free and confidential advice service for parents and carers of children with a disability or illness.

The **Children's Social Care and SEND Advice Clinic** will take place at Alder Hey Children's Hospital every Thursday morning until early December and appointments will be available for those with a connection to the Hospital. For other parents and carers, appointments will be available at our Clinic on the University of Liverpool campus on a flexible basis.

To find out more information visit www.liverpool.ac.uk/law/liverpool-law-clinic. To get in contact email clinic@liverpool.ac.uk or telephone 0151 794 5782.



Who to ask?

Finding information about services and support in your local area – THE LOCAL OFFER

Every Local Authority should have information on services for children with SEN or disabilities set out in an area of their website named the ‘**local offer**’ and should be easily accessible on council websites. It should list information about how and where you can get support from for your child to enable them to have the same opportunities as any other child, prevent isolation and promote good mental health and wellbeing and community involvement.

It should have information on a wide range of things such as local parent support groups, carer’s assessments and short breaks; Special educational needs and health; leisure activities and play schemes. Information should be clear and provide an overview of the pathways to accessing additional support. Some of these may involve an assessment of your child’s needs and this should take into account the needs of you as a parent and the whole family as well as your child. It should tell you about short breaks available in your area both specialist and mainstream activities and how to access these.

If you can’t find a service or have any difficulties with the information on the local offer site then there is an opportunity to send feedback about this, in fact it is the duty of the local authority to promote feedback, to examine gaps in services that parents may raise and to respond to any parent enquiries and review service provision in response to parental feedback. Many of the local offer pages are ‘works in progress’ as they grow and respond to parental feedback to make improvements. Here are the links to local offer pages across the North West.

Cheshire

- Cheshire East - local offer can be found at:
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/what-is-the-local-offer/local_offer.aspx
- Cheshire West and Chester - local offer can be found at:
<http://www.westcheshirelocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/cheshirewestandchester/directory/localoffer.page>
- Halton - local offer can be found at:
<http://localoffer.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/>
- Warrington - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/localoffer/>





Finding information about services and support in your local area continued...

Cumbria

- Local offers for South Lakeland, Copeland, Allerdale, Eden, Carlisle, can be found at:
<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/cumbria/fsd/home.page>



Greater Manchester

- Bolton - local offer can be found at:
<http://www.localdirectory.bolton.gov.uk/send.aspx>
- Bury - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.theburydirectory.co.uk/kb5/bury/directory/localoffer.page>
- Manchester local offer can be found at:
<https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/kb5/manchester/directory/directory.page?directorychannel=1-7>
- Oldham - local offer can be found at:
http://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200368/children_with_disabilities
- Rochdale - local offer can be found at:
<https://rochdale.fsd.org.uk/kb5/rochdale/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>
- Salford - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.salford.gov.uk/localoffer>
- Stockport - local offer can be found at:
<https://stockport.fsd.org.uk/kb5/stockport/fsd/localoffer.page>
- Tameside - local offer can be found at:
<http://www.tameside.gov.uk/localoffer>
- Trafford - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/kb5/trafford/fsd/localoffer.page>
- Wigan - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Special-Educational-Needs-and-Disability/Special-Educational-Needs-and-Disabilities.aspx>



Merseyside

- Knowsley - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.knowsleyinfo.co.uk/categories/knowsley-local-offer-send>
- Liverpool - local offer can be found at:
<http://fsd.liverpool.gov.uk/kb5/liverpool/fsd/localoffer.page>





Finding information about services and support in your local area continued...

- St. Helens - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/schools-education/sen-the-local-offer/>
- Sefton - local offer can be found at:
<https://www.seftondirectory.com/kb5/sefton/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>
- Wirral - local offer can be found at:
<http://localofferwirral.org/>

Lancashire

- Lancashire - local offer can be found at:
<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities.aspx>
- Blackburn with Darwen - local offer can be found at:
<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/blackburn/directory/localoffer.page>
- Blackpool – local offer can be found at:
<https://blackpool.fsd.org.uk/kb5/blackpool/fsd/localoffer.page>



Other useful sources to find out what's on...

Your local **Family Information Service (FIS)** should know what is going on for families with disabled children in your area. There is no longer a national number and each local area has its own contact number but you can search for your local FIS at www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nafis

Support groups can be a great source of information. If you know of a local support group in your area, either for children with disabilities generally, or a group set up for the same condition as your child, ask them if they have details of suitable events.

Carers centres are there for anyone who is an unpaid carer for another person. They often have strong links with parent carer forums. Lots of services advertise their events with carers centres and they frequently hold their own events.

Parent advisors, family support workers and **SENCOs** in schools, often keep abreast of local events, meetings, groups and play schemes, so ask if they know of anything suitable.



Other useful sources to find out what's on continued...

Your **local parent carer forum** represents parent's voices in the local authority area. They often provide local information and **may** offer events, workshops, training and consultations for parent carers in their area to enable them to get involved in influencing local services.

For more information about forums please contact: **Kate Hurn** – Parent Carer Participation Advisor, kate.hurn@contact.org.uk or phone 07458 045 694. Or see contact details below for your area forum

Blackburn with Darwen – Tel: 07923 252483 Website: www.bwdpip.org.uk

Blackpool Parent Forum – Tel: 07889 156310 or Blackpool Parent Forum - Facebook page

Bolton Parent Carer Consortium – Tel: 07715 201798 web: www.bpcc.org.uk

Bury Parents Forum: bury2gether@gmail.com or www.facebook.com/groups/Bury2Gether

Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum – Tel: 07794 431768 or visit www.cepcf.co.uk

Cheshire West and Chester Parent Part. Parent Carer Forum -
iasservice@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Tel: 0300 1237001

Cumbria Parent Carer Forum - www.cumbriaparentcarerforum.org.uk Tel: 07702580347

Halton - Halton.impart@outlook.com Tel: 01928 580182

Knowsley Parent Carers Voice - www.knowsleyinfo.co.uk/content/knowsley-parent-carers-voice Tel: 0151 549 1412

Liverpool, LivPaC – livpac@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 0151 727 5271

Manchester - www.manchesterparentcarerforum.org.uk Email:
info@manchesterparentcarerforum.org.uk

Parents of Oldham in Touch (POINT) - www.pointoldham.co.uk Tel: 0161 503 1555

Rochdale Parent Carers Voice – contactus@rochdaleparentcarersvoice.co.uk Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/theparentforum/>

Salford Parent Voice – info@salfordparentvoice.co.uk Tel: 01616036833

Sefton Parent Carer Forum – Email: seftonparentcarerforum@gmail.com Tel: 07934 274449

St Helens - Listen 4 Change - www.sthelenscarers.org.uk Tel: 01744 675615

PIPS (Parents in Partnership Stockport) - www.pipstockport.org Tel: 07786 101 072

Tameside - Our Kids Eyes - www.ourkidseyes.org Tel: 0161 371 2084

Trafford Parent Forum – traffordparentsforum@gmail.com Email:
hello@traffordparentsforum.org

Warrington parents and carers - www.warringtonparentsandcarers.org Tel: 07581 302 172

Wigan Parent Carers Forum – <http://www.embracewiganandleigh.org.uk/index.php> email:
info@embracewiganandleigh.org.uk Tel: 01942 233323

Wirral Parent Carer Participation – Email: contact@wired.me.uk Tel: 0151 522 7990

Lancashire (DfE funded parent Carer forum supported by CONTACT) – cathrat130@gmail.com

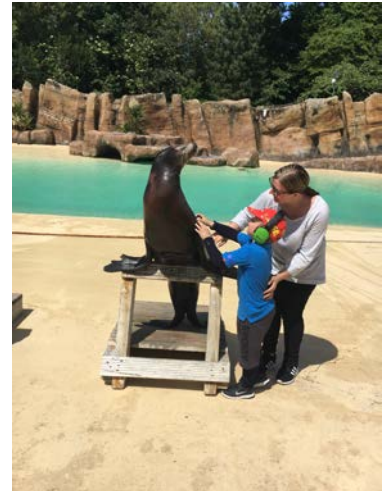




Useful contacts and numbers

Contact's Freephone helpline advisers can help you with any question you have about life with a disabled child – from getting a diagnosis for your child, the services and benefits you might be entitled to, to childcare options in the early years and support when your child is at school or college. We can also put you in touch with support groups in your area.

Call our free helpline on **0808 808 3555** or email your query helpline@contact.org.uk. We're open 9.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday and have access to interpreters. Visit www.contact.org.uk for more information.



Interested in Volunteering?

Would you be interested in volunteering with contact North West office? We are looking for volunteers to either offer support at the office with developing newsletters and parent packs; helping update our NW webpage or supporting Parent Advisors at our information stands or workshops.

If you're interested or want to find out more please email northwest@contact.org.uk or telephone 01772 424758 (answer phone available please leave contact details).

Prize Winners

Thank you to all the families that completed the survey last year and for the feedback you gave us. As demand for our services grows we need your support to tell us what difference Contact NW makes and where we can improve. We need to raise more money to continue to offer our regional support and your feedback on what it is you need and want from us really helps us to do this. Finally, Congratulations to the families that won the family days out! These families have chosen to visit Gulliver's World; Blackpool Zoo and the Sealife centre so far.

Look out for more prizes to be won in our next newsletter 😊



Registration

**Not your own copy? Need to update your details?
Fill out our registration form...**

You can get a form sent by email from our staff at northwest@contact.org.uk and send it back to us electronically. If you would like us to send you a registration form or you would like to write to us about something, you can send a letter to us at **North West Registration, Contact, Office 2 Centurion House, Leyland Business Park, Centurion Way, Leyland, PR25 3GR.**

If we have your details we can send you our free newsletters, information about family events and news about all kinds of issues that may affect your family or the families you work with. Contact is committed to the confidentiality of your personal information. Personal data will be held and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will not be shared with any third parties for commercial use.

Contact would like to thank the following for their generous support of our work in the North West Region: The Big Lottery Fund, Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, Maria Marina Foundation, Sir Francis Scott Trust and The Pilkington Trust.

Don't forget to look at our...

Website, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter discussions by clicking on the links on the website at www.contact.org.uk you will find lots of information and advice there including:

- Publications and leaflets
- News Stories
- A to Z of medical conditions
- Fundraising activities and campaigns
- Online community (To get in touch with other parents)
- Support for professionals

Disclaimer...

Every effort is made to ensure the information in this newsletter is correct. Contact can accept no liability for errors and omissions and cannot recommend products or services. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Contact.

