

Using the media to reach more parent carers and amplify your forum's message

A Contact webinar presented by Elaine Bennett, Press & Comms Manager at Contact

October 2019



Welcome!

Welcome to this Contact webinar.

If there is a technical hitch, please do bear with us.

Those of you joining by pc, laptop, tablet or smart phone should now be able to see this introduction slide.



Timings and Questions

As there are so many attendees, it is not practical for verbal questions to be taken, therefore you will all remain 'muted' throughout

If at any point you have questions, please use the question icon on your GoToWebinar tool bar on your screen, this will allow you to type your question in to the text box and submit this to the Webinar administrator

I will select as many relevant questions to answer as time allows, if similar questions are received I will condense these where possible



Q & A

Further relevant questions, not covered in the time allowed, will be answered and posted on the Contact website along with the recording of this Webinar, details of which will be circulated next week

At the end of the Webinar a short questionnaire will launch, please take the time to complete this as this will assist with future online training events



Why talk to the press? The value of getting your name in the local news

- Reach more families
- Raising awareness of the impact of parent carer forums – your work and activities bring about positive change for all families with disabled children
- Build your profile with professionals locally and more widely



Contact's Awards media coverage

Reach: 2 million Advertising Value: £87K



Selling your story...

What are journalists looking for in a story?

T – topical; of the moment, timely, new and something people are talking about

R - relevant to a specific audience

U – unusual; not what people already know or expect. Something which will surprise the audience. Is it the first? The biggest? The smallest? In the world of social media it is something which will make people click through to the story (clickbait).

T – trouble. Show how you are solving a problem.

H – human interest. What is in it for people? What impact will it have?



Local news needs you!

Journalists need you. Over stretched, under resourced. If you give them a good story there's a good chance it will feature in the newspaper or on the radio.

Not all bad news - they are looking for positive stories too

Challenge: how many of you know your local newspaper or radio station contacts?

If you don't know. Why not over the next few weeks find time to find the details of your local journalists – a general reporter or one that covers social affairs stories/features.

Email elaine.bennett@contact.org.uk



Forums get a good press

17th July

National award marks support group's remarkable rise

By Huw Mabe
Reporter



A group supporting the families of children with special educational needs has won a national award.

South Glos Parents and Carers picked up an Excellence in Parent Carer Participation Award at a ceremony in the Palace of Westminster on July 8.

The award was part of disability charity Contact's 'Together at 40' celebrations. The award was presented by children and families minister Nadhim Zahawi, with the ceremony hosted by Women's Hour presenter Jane Garvey.

South Glos Parents and Carers has seen a remarkable rise since forming ten years ago.

In 2009 they were a group of eight parents meeting in a coffee shop but they now have more than 1,150 members.

Rachel Trueman, founder and CEO, said "We are thrilled to have won this award. Our passion and our drive are to see service improvements for our community and making sure that we are fully involved in the process.

Most read

Comment

Read more

Get involved with the r
in your community

Send your stories and photos n

Council invests in SEND provision with new dedicated centre

01 August 2019 by Katy Morton

Be the first to comment

A new flagship centre for disabled children has been opened by Westminster City Council.



Pictured left to right: third to left-Councillor Lorraine Dean, Councillor Acton, bi-borough

It comes at a time when cuts are being made up and down the country to provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

• Big Issue: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Tresham Centre in Lisson Grove is open to disabled children up to the age of 18 and their families. It has been created with input from local parents including those from Westminster's SEND parent and carer forum 'Make it Happen'.

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LATEST ARTICLES

Book now for the 2019
Nursery World
Business Summit

PM orders 'urgent'
action to boost MMR
vaccination rates



Writing a press release

- Journalists are generally taught to get as many of the "five Ws" (who, what, where, why and when) in the opening line of **news** stories, and this is a good rule to follow when writing a press release.
- Be brief - The ideal length of a press release is about an A4 side or 300-400 words. That's just three or four short paragraphs and a couple of quotes.
- Quotes should be used to provide insight and opinion and sound like a real person said them. Avoid jargon!
- Don't forget to include contact details, so they can get in touch for further details or to arrange a photograph
- Look at what is going on in the news and time your release – avoid major local events, because your news story will get lost. Choosing quiet news week if possible.
- Have a case study.



Press release examples

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elaine Bennett or Michele Cefai, t: 07599 930 090 e: press@contact.org.uk

Families with disabled children invited to free special theatre event in Lincoln

Contact Midlands, the charity for families with disabled children, is inviting disabled children and their families to a free family theatre event in Lincoln to see the Selfish Giant.

The children's classic will be brought to life on the stage, and will entertain both children and parents alike during a relaxed performance. It's being held at the County Assembly Rooms in Lincoln on Wednesday 13 March 6-7.30pm.

The show is aimed at primary school age children, but all ages are welcome. All tickets are free but must be booked in advance. To book email westmids.office@contact.org.uk

ENDS

Notes to editors

- Contact is the charity for families with disabled children. We support families, bring families together and help families take action for others.
- To find out more or to book your place email westmids.office@contact.org.uk or telephone 0121 274 0437.
- Parents of disabled children who need support can call Contact's national freephone helpline 0808 808 3555.

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elaine Bennett or Michele Cefai, t: 07599 930 090 e: press@contact.org.uk

First ever national event to improve life chances for disabled young people in Scotland

Over 100 parents of disabled young people from across Scotland will gather in Glasgow today (Wednesday 13 March) at the first ever post school transitions conference of its kind.

The event specifically designed for parent carers is being organised by Contact Scotland, the charity for families with disabled children, and will include a keynote address from Maree Todd, Scottish Government Minister for Children and Young People.

Susan Walls, Manager at Contact Scotland, said: "Parents of disabled young people tell us how difficult it is to get the right information and support around the options for their child as they move into adulthood. Growing up is one of the biggest changes any young person will face and what they experience at this time can have a huge impact on their life chances.

"If doors are not open to disabled young people at this crucial time, it can impact the rest of their life - for instance they may be more dependent on care or miss out on things other teens take for granted. But when everything goes well, it's life changing both for the young person and their family."



Forums amplify their news

New forum for Oxfordshire parents of children with special needs

By
JACK DUGGAN
Email

Published: 16:20
Thursday 01 November 2018

Share this article



10 best electric bikes for 2019 – the top options for every budget
E-bikes are becoming more and more popular now prices have started to come down.
Promoted by ibuys

A new forum for Oxfordshire parents to work with the council and health services to improve services for children with special educational needs is being launched.

Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum will be launching at the Oxfordshire Family Support Network's Better Together Event at the Kassam Stadium on November 8.

As members of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, the group will support the development of parents working with professionals to make improvements to services.

The group believes that all disabled children and young people in Oxfordshire should have access to the same opportunities, experiences and information, as any other child.

New group putting the case for special needs services in Lancashire

A group of parent volunteers says it wants to provide “a collective voice” for Lancashire families who have children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Lancashire Parent Carer Forum (PCF) is designed to represent the interests of children and young adults and help shape the local services on which they and their families rely.

READ MORE >>> [Special needs service likely to be re-inspected this summer](#)

The Department for Education encourages all council areas in the country to work with a PCF. A previous incarnation in Lancashire represented the 21,000 households in the county which have a young person with SEND, until it disbanded in 2017.

The new PCF emerged last year, following a damning report into the provision of SEND services in the Lancashire County Council area. Regulators found that there was “bewilderment” amongst families about how decisions were made about their children and also highlighted the number of children with SEND who had been excluded from secondary school.

1
comments



**HAVE
YOUR SAY**



Case studies

- Use real life stories to bring your news to life.
- Add a quote from a parent or arrange a picture of families for press.
- As forums you are in strong position because you are in touch with so many families.

News

20th June

Weymouth beach hut for disabled children gets extended stay

By Alex Cutler | [@dorsetechoalex](#)
Reporter



Lesley Mellor, right, opens the facility in 2013

A BEACH hut used by children with disabilities has been granted planning permission to extend its stay on Weymouth Beach.

The hut has been used since 2013 as a changing facility for families who have children with disabilities or special needs.

Planning permission was granted in 2013 for seasonal use of the beach hut between March 1 and October 31 but that ran out last year.

Dorset Council has now approved the continued seasonal siting of this facility with wheelchair access and a terrace.

Guardian Roofs
Dorset

**The Guardian™ Roof
can reduce heat loss**

It is the brainchild of the Dorset Parent-Carer Council, a group that has volunteered to make positive changes for young people with disabilities for many years.

All Saint
Church of England Academy

**OPEN
EVENING**
THURSDAY
OCTOBER 10TH
5:00PM

FIND OUT MORE



Have a plan

At Contact we have a media plan that sets out what we are going to publicise throughout the year:

- Fundraising activity
- Campaigns activity
- Help and guidance
- Key issues on our helpline
- Events
- Launch of new services
- Changes in the organisation – new appointments
- Awareness days

Spokesperson

- Decide who is going to speak on behalf of your forum and if possible have a back up. Keep all contact details up to date



Media interviews – dos & don'ts

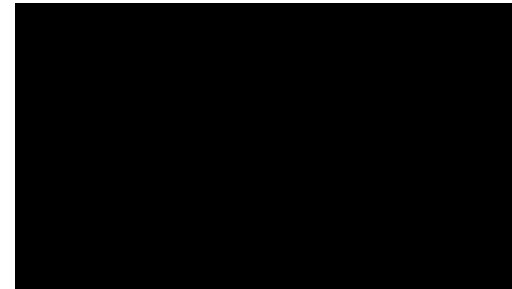


"We aren't short of money to spend on reservoirs... we're urgently anxious to understand what has happened in this case..."

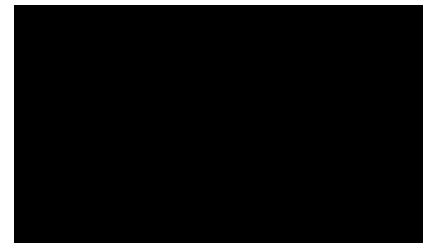
- Richard Parry, chief executive of the Canal & River Trust – which runs the collapsed dam in Whaley Bridge#newsnight | @CanalRiverTrust | @EmmaBarnett



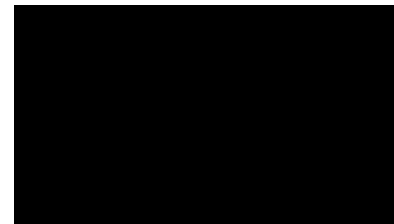
19 10:49 PM - Aug 1, 2019



» <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYAleoDIJd4>



» https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueCQB_YWvuk



» <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97IFbWNHvT4>



Responding to a news story

Criteria for a reactive media response

- Does Contact have existing knowledge, expertise or information on the subject – does it fall into one of our priority areas:
 - Benefits
 - SEN
 - Other (social care, health, behaviour, transport) agreed each year with head of policy depending on what is happening politically and in our campaigns
- Are there other organisations better placed to respond to the story?
- Does this request represent a good opportunity to:
 - Influence the angle of a story to ensure the voice of parent carers is heard
 - Promote an area of Contact's expertise or strategic objectives
 - Raise awareness of issues for families with disabled children



Social media – what's your purpose?

Benefits:

- Build your profile
- More members
- Funding opportunities

Think about why are you are on social media and what you are trying to achieve

- Communicate and engage with parents?
- Encourage parents to attend your events?
- Both?
- Something else?



Digital forums

South Glos Parents and Carers - not for profit CIC

✓
@sglospandc

Home

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Like Follow Share ...

See All Groups

Upcoming Events



Sep 26 **Community Base Term Time Drop-in**
Sep 5, 2019 - Jul 16, 2020
Wellness

★ Interested

Sep 26 **Little Treasures play, fun and support**
Sep 12, 2019 - Jul 16, 2020 · Hanham Baptist Church · Br...
Wellness

★ Interested



hiphackney

@hiphackney

Hackney's independent forum for parents/carers of children with disabilities

📍 Hackney

🌐 hiphackney.org.uk

📅 Joined May 2012



Tweets 15.8K Following 2,007 Followers 1,529 Likes 7,296 Lists 1

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

📌 Pinned Tweet

hiphackney @hiphackney · Sep 19
This is what is happening next week in #Hackney #autism #girls RT



Somerset Parent Carer Forum

Tweets 5,490 Following 826 Followers 827 Likes 970

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

🔄 Somerset PCForum Retweeted

Foxes Academy @FoxesAcademy · Sep 23

Another @LearnersFoxes 2019 graduate has paid employment with @HiltonHotels. The job offer in housekeeping follows a successful work trial proving it is abilities that count. Well done Ella! #Springboard2019 #Employability



Have a plan

Contact's strategy:

- For our beneficiaries we use social media to promote our work to our on a platform we know they use, to help them find the information support and advice they need through our website, workshops, guides, factsheets, helpline etc, and to give them a channel through which they can contact us with support or other queries.
- For our wider audience of stakeholders, we use social media to attract new audiences and gain trust in our brand and services.

Content plan – ensure regular, timely content each month

Develop a bank of messages and images to use under themes Our content plan:

- Policy and campaigns
- Help and guidance
- Fundraising

Decide when you are going to respond – balancing providing a timely response with being able to think through your response




Content, content, content

- Content that sparks an emotional reaction, both good and bad
- Think about your audience and what is of interest to them
- Less is more - Only share relevant content that will be of interest
- Consider the language used on social media
- Don't be afraid to have a voice and share your opinion
- Topical news stories - linked to your own content
- Photographs and pictures
 - Copyright-free image banks – Pixabay or Unsplash
- Videos
- Share content if you don't have your own
- Awareness days
- Q&As



Making an impact


» 12k+ reach, 125 reactions, 64 comments, 118 shares

 **Contact - For families with disabled children** July 19 · 🌐

It is grossly unfair that the law says a young person is expected to be in school or training until 18, but does not have the right to transport to enable them to get there once they turn 16 <http://ow.ly/Lu0q50v5F5X>

We have advice and information for families in England on transport for young people over 16 on our website <http://ow.ly/dYHD50v5YWK>

#SchoolRunCrisis




BBC NEWS

BBC.COM

Disabled girl faces £870 school bus bill

Leia Daunter, 16, cannot return to school in Hereford due to council cuts,...

 About this website

» Videos: moving pictures tend to perform well

 **Contact - For families with disabled children** July 30 · 🌐

How brilliant is this... 🙌

London's Wheelie Gang helps children who use wheelchairs make friends and grow their confidence <http://ow.ly/dBKO50vgE00>



BBC NEWS

BBC.COM

Finding new friends in the Wheelie Gang

A mother set up a club for children in wheelchairs to help her daughter...

  49

2 Comments 6 Shares



Making an impact



Parent Carer Forum @WiganPCF · Sep 14

Open meeting for parent carers, #Wigan #SEND transformation updates.
Tuesday 17th September 12:30 Ashland House Ince. ❤️💚💙🌈



💬 ↺️ ❤️ 2



National Network of Parent Carer Forums
@NNPCF

Home
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National Network of Parent Carer Forums
September 6 at 10:25 AM · 🌐

Recently our Co-Chairs met with the Minister for Children and Families, along with the Director of Council for Disabled Children and the CEO's of Contact and Kids. From this meeting we have drawn up a SEND review statement that we have published on our website at <https://buff.ly/2N3Syty>



Southampton Parent Carer Forum

@southamptonparentcarerforum

Home

About
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Events
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Posts
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Poll

Posts



Southampton Parent Carer Forum

September 19 at 4:21 PM · 🌐

The forum met with Active nation today to give feedback re: the Max Card/Buzz Network SEND Sessions. Something that came out of the meeting is that some of the activities are on a 10 week changeable, rolling contract and we are now looking for ideas as to how the new sessions could look. If you get 5 mins, could you add a comment to indicate the sessions that would appeal to your children and family please? Thank you 😊

Ideas so far are around the multi-sports session at Bi... See More



👍 6

15 Comments 3 Shares



LivPaC

@LivPaCL8

We are Liverpool Parent Carer Forum (LivPaC) for parent/Carers & families of children & young people 0-25yrs with disabilities and any additional needs

📍 Liverpool, England

🌐 livpac.co.uk

📅 Joined August 2017

Tweets
1,669

Following
1,470

Followers
730

Likes
276

Tweets

Tweets & replies

Media



LivPaC @LivPaCL8 · 7h

Looking forward to our Coffee Morning today @stsilasschool with @Isabella_Trust @sreddy100 @CllrBMurray @john_holt01 @SIL_SEND

💬

↺️ 1

❤️ 3



LivPaC @LivPaCL8 · 17h

💚💚💚💚

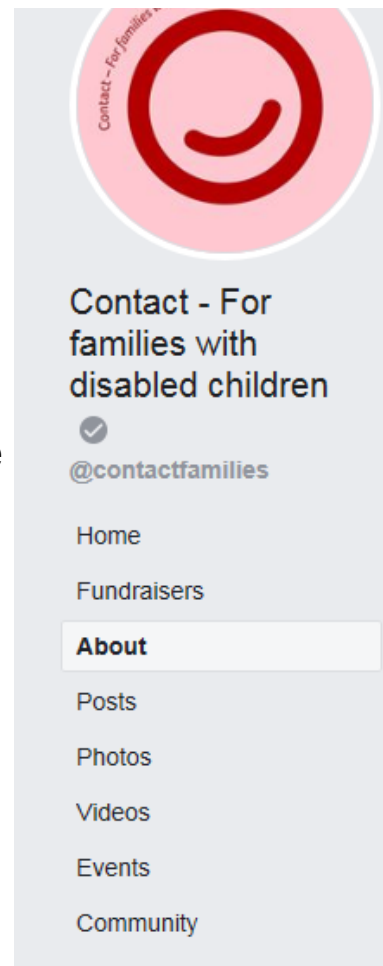
Fresh+Group @FreshPlusGroup

Replying to @LivPaCL8 @Isabella_Trust and 3 others



Guidelines

- » Manage expectations of followers
- » When will your page be checked
- » What content will you share



i To help you get the most out of our page, please take a look at our guidelines below.

Posting queries:

If you have a question about anything to do with caring for your child, you can post it here or send us a private message. We'll pass your query onto our team of helpline advisers, and they'll aim to respond within one working day. If we think we need more time to answer, we'll let you know.

You can also speak to one of our advisers by calling our freephone helpline (Monday-Friday, 9.30am-5pm) on 0800 808 3555.

Getting involved in our page:

We'd love you to get involved in the discussions happening on our page. Sharing tips and advice can be a great way of finding support and making friends.

We want our Facebook community to be supportive, respectful and useful for people, so we ask that posts don't contain swearwords; aren't abusive to us or other users; don't attempt to intentionally hijack or 'troll' discussions; and do not promote any commercial interests, research opportunities or petitions, surveys or donation requests. We may hide or remove posts that don't abide by these community standards or block offending users.

Page moderation and confidentiality:

This page is moderated by our digital team Monday-Friday, 9.30am-5pm.



When and how to respond – bad practice alert!

Matthew Harris @mattiasharris · Aug 6, 2019
#easyjet beats @Ryanair to have backless seats. @IATA @EASA
this is flight 2021 Luton to Geneva. How can this be allowed.
@GeneveAeroport @easyJet_press @easyJet



DesertWolfPS
@DesertWolfPS

So @easyjet demands pics removed from Twitter BEFORE they'll even investigate??? Wow... this will appear in future marketing courses on how corp cust service should NEVER respond.

16 6:58 PM - Aug 6, 2019

easyJet @easyJet · Aug 6, 2019
Replying to @mattiasharris
Hi Matthew, thanks for bringing this to our attention, before we can investigate this could I ask you to remove the photograph & then DM us more info regarding this, so we can best assist you. Ross
[twitter.com/messages/compo...](https://twitter.com/messages/compose)

Kit Tona "12 years left"
@tona_kit

Hi EasyJet.
Did you seriously just ask him to remove the photo? 🙄
You haven't really spent much time on the internet yet, have you?
Better buckle up.

178 **krapo**
@krapomusic

I don't want to fly with a company that asks its customers to remove photographs. We need to be able to know what to expect, we need to be able to tell and show when something is wrong.
I'm never again flying with Easyjet.

162 3:45 PM - Aug 6, 2019

www.mediafirst.co.uk/blog/



Homework

Think about how you would respond differently to the following:

- A difficult question
- An angry follower
- A friendly enquiry

Go through the process that you would employ for each one.



Richard Hobbs

Communications lead at NNPCF and Steering group member at Somerset Parent Carer Forum



Thank you!

Thank you for attending with us today.

A short questionnaire will launch at the end of this webinar.
Please take the time to complete this as it will help us plan future events.

The recording of this webinar and presentation will be available on Contact's website in the next two weeks. Look out for news about this on our homepage and social media networks.

