

contact

*For families
with disabled children*

Contact publishes a wide range of guides for parents.

All our guides are free for parents who call our freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555. The helpline can print out and send you a copy. They can be also downloaded [free from our website](#)

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[How Contact can help](#) [in print and online]
All about how we can help – free

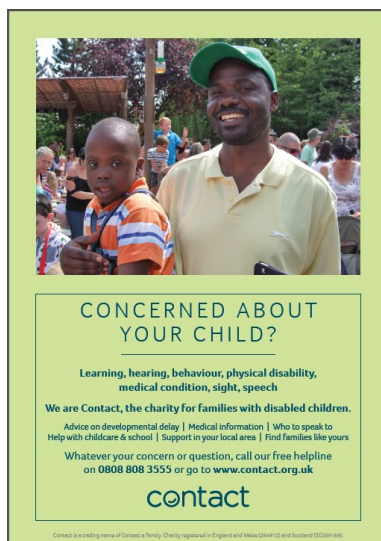
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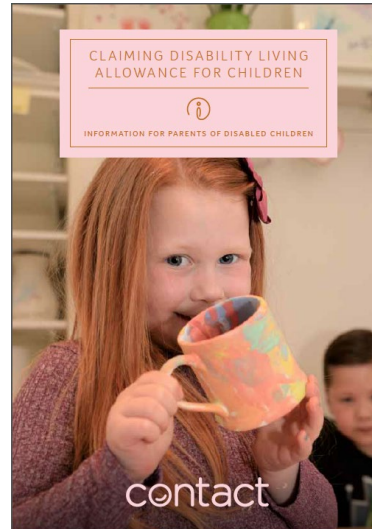
Money and finance

[Money Matters checklist– England/Wales](#)
[Money matters checklist –Scotland](#)

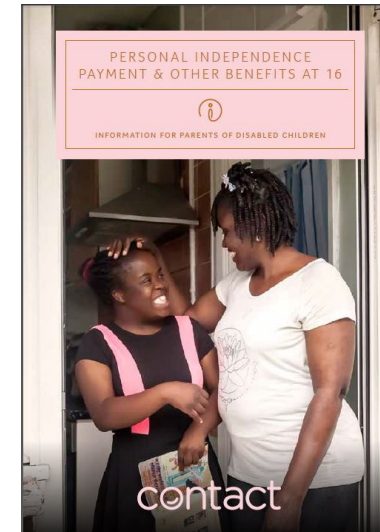
Benefits and other financial support [online]



[Claiming Disability Living Allowance for children](#)
 How to fill in the form [online]



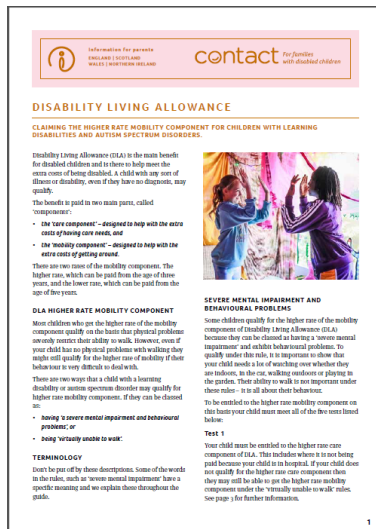
[Personal Independence Payment and other benefits at 16](#) [online]



[Disability Living Allowance for children with learning disabilities - high rate mobility component](#) [online]

[Claiming Child Disability Payment – Scotland](#) [online]

[Adult Disability Payment – Scotland](#) [online]



Disability Living Allowance when your child is in hospital [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE WHEN YOUR CHILD IS IN HOSPITAL

The government has scrapped the rules which previously stopped payment of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) when a child was in hospital.

WHAT WERE THE DLA HOSPITAL RULES FOR CHILDREN?

In the past, once a child had been a hospital inpatient for 84 days (or all days of aged 4 or above) their DLA payments were suspended.

In addition, where a child first made a claim for DLA when they were in hospital, they needed to wait until they were discharged home before those payments could start. Similar rules applied to PIP.

These rules have now been scrapped for children under 16 years of age.

WHY HAVE THE RULES BEEN SCRAPPED?

In July 2016 the Supreme Court found that the DLA hospital rules breached the human rights of a severely disabled child called Cameron Mathison.

Following the Mathison decision, the government introduced an interim policy of not suspending DLA or PIP payments where a child was in hospital.


This interim policy has now become law, as a result of changes to regulations introduced on the 24 June 2017 in England, Wales and Scotland, and from the 6 July 2017 in Northern Ireland.

WHAT ARE THE NEW RULES?

So long as your son or daughter is aged under 16 when they become an inpatient, payments of DLA or PIP continue as normal while they are in hospital. It does not matter how long they are in hospital for.

If someone is aged 16 or above and first claims PIP when they are a hospital inpatient (and they do not already get DLA), they will need to wait until they are discharged home before their PIP payments can start.

Young people who turn 16 while in hospital are not affected by the DLA/PIP hospital rules. This is because you can exempt to long as you were under 16 when you first made a hospital inpatient claim.



Carer's Allowance [online] Explains the rules of the main benefit for carers

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. You might be able to claim if your child receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA) care component at the middle or highest rate or the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). For more information about DLA and PIP see our factsheet **Claiming Disability Living Allowance for children and Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**.

HOW ARE MY EARNINGS ASSESSED FOR CARER'S ALLOWANCE?

Only your own earnings are counted. If you have a partner who works their earnings are ignored. In calculating your earnings, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can make certain deductions from your gross pay. This includes not only tax and national insurance you pay but also deductions for:

- any other malice care costs that you pay. This includes any childcare cost you have while you are working whether this is for a disabled child or any other children under 16. If the person you pay is not 16 or over and you have any someone to look after them while you work then those care costs can also be deducted. There is a cap on the maximum amount that can be deducted in this way – this is half of your net earnings. There is an exemption that any unpaid childcare providers (DWP) can make certain deductions from your gross pay. This includes not only tax and national insurance you pay but also deductions for:
- any other malice care costs that you pay. This includes any childcare cost you have while you are working whether this is for a disabled child or any other children under 16. If the person you pay is not 16 or over and you have any someone to look after them while you work then those care costs can also be deducted. There is a cap on the maximum amount that can be deducted in this way – this is half of your net earnings. There is an exemption that any unpaid childcare providers (DWP) can make certain deductions from your gross pay. This includes not only tax and national insurance you pay but also deductions for:
- 50 per cent of any pension contributions that you make into a work or personal pension scheme and
- an amount for any expenses you have that are wholly and necessarily incurred in carrying out your work and which you are not reimbursed by your employer for, such as the cost of buying equipment or specialist clothing or having to pay for travel to work which is above that between work and home does not count.

If your earnings vary they should be averaged out, although the period over which they are averaged is at the discretion of the DWP. If you are self-employed your average earnings will normally be based on your most recent year's accounts, unless there has been a change in the nature of your business.

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR CARER'S ALLOWANCE?

You can claim if you are aged 16 years or over and:

- you look after someone who gets DLA care component at the middle or highest rate or the daily living component of PIP or a disabled child who is not a person with disabilities called attendance allowance
- you look after that person for at least 35 hours a week
- you are not earning more than £122 a week. See below for more details about how your earnings are calculated.

you are not still in full-time education. Generally you're treated as not in full-time education if your course is described as full-time by the educational establishment, although there are some exceptions for example you've been granted an exemption from parts of your course or the course is not a traditional university type course requiring private study. Even if the course isn't described as full-time, you still have to be on a full-time education if it involves 21 hours or more supervised study per week.

you meet certain tests linked to your immigration status and the length of your presence in the UK.


You can only get one award of Carer's Allowance, even if you are looking after more than one disabled person. If you share the care of your child with another person and you each provide at least 10 hours a week care, only one of you can get Carer's Allowance for that child.

Help with Council Tax bills [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

HELP WITH COUNCIL TAX BILLS

Information for Parents of Disabled Children ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & WALES



contact

Universal Credit for young disabled people in education [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

UNIVERSAL CREDIT FOR YOUNG DISABLED PEOPLE IN EDUCATION

Universal Credit is a benefit for people aged between 16 and 64. It can be paid to people who are not working and in line with an employment. It is replacing a range of existing benefits for people of working age with a single monthly payment. This grant is for when a young disabled person is aged 16 to 64 and is in education, training, or on a course at a college or university.

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

Universal Credit is a single benefit that replaces a range of existing benefits for people of working age with a single monthly payment. This grant is for when a young disabled person is aged 16 to 64 and is in education, training, or on a course at a college or university.

- you are submitting medical certificates from their GP or
- they have established that they have a limited capability for work.

Whether your child is claiming Universal Credit or not, you can still claim:

- the age of education they are in
- whether it is full or part time
- their age if they are someone who is in full-time non-advanced education.

If your child is in education, they will not be able to claim Universal Credit as long as they meet the usual qualification criteria. Some of the usual qualification criteria are:

- the age of education they are in
- whether it is full or part time
- their age if they are someone who is in full-time non-advanced education.

Non-advanced education is a school or college course below A-level or GCE level. It can also include some further education courses, apprenticeships, certain types of advanced training, and:

- vocational employment and support allowance
- PIP - Personal Independence Payment
- MCA - Work Capability Assessment

Universal Credit – the essentials [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

UNIVERSAL CREDIT – THE ESSENTIALS

Universal Credit is a new benefit for people aged between 16 and 64. It can be paid to people who are not working and in line with an employment. It is replacing a range of existing benefits for people of working age with a single monthly payment. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and most people are expected to claim it online.

WHICH BENEFITS ARE BEING REPLACED BY UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

Universal credit is gradually replacing:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit (except for those in some types of supported accommodation)

There are known as 'legacy benefits'. Other benefits such as Carer's Allowance, Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and Council Tax Reduction will remain and can be paid alongside Universal Credit.

WHO CAN CLAIM UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

You can claim Universal Credit if you have one or more dependent children. Apart from that, most people of working age can claim. You can claim regardless of whether you are not working or in employment. You can claim if you are a job-seeker, a carer, or someone who is unable to work. You must have certain assets linked to your residence and presence in the UK.

WHAT ARE MOST LIKELY TO MAKE A CLAIM?


Usually claimants have to be aged 16 or over (with special rules allow some 16 or 17 year olds to claim), including some disabled 16 or 17 year olds. Most people in full-time education cannot claim Universal Credit unless they have a dependent child. However, disabled students can claim if they get the DLA or PIP and are assessed as unable to work.

WHEN WILL I EXPECT TO CLAIM UNIVERSAL CREDIT?

When Universal Credit was first introduced, you could claim if you were looking after a disabled child, or if you were a disabled adult. However, this is slowly changing and some disabled adults will be asked to claim Universal Credit if they live in an area where the Universal Credit full service has been introduced. In full service areas you will be expected to claim Universal Credit if:

- you have a change of circumstances that mean you're not a parent with care or a non-dependent claimant
- you are not a parent with care or a non-dependent claimant

For example, if you're a single parent with two children who live in a full service area, you have her job and then to claim income support. She will be told that because she lives in a full service area the change make a new claim for income support and must claim



Benefits if your child is in residential accommodation [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND | SCOTLAND | WALES | NORTHERN IRELAND **contact** for families with disabled children

BENEFITS IF YOUR CHILD IS IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

This factsheet looks at what happens to benefit payments where a disabled child is in residential accommodation. If your child has overnight stays away from home in a residential care or a residential educational setting, some of the benefits you receive are likely to be affected.

This factsheet will explain what happens to your benefits if your disabled child is away from home in any of the following settings:

- residential care or college
- residential care home
- respite or short break placement in a residential setting

HOW WILL IT AFFECT MY BENEFITS?

There are different rules for each benefit. Some may stop altogether, some may be reduced, while others may continue to be paid as usual. It is important that you tell the relevant benefits and Tax Credit offices when your child goes into residential care even if they only go for a few nights each month.

WHO SHOULD I TELL?

You need to tell each office separately as they do not always pass on information. No one else will do this on your behalf, so tell them as soon as you can to avoid any overpayments.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

If you get either of these benefits for your child, contact:

- DLA helpline: 0800 121 4400
- PIP helpline: 0800 121 4433

Carer's Allowance

If you get Carer's Allowance, contact:

- Carer's Allowance helpline: 0800 371 3097

Child Tax Credit

If you get Child Tax Credit, contact:

- The Child Tax Office: 0800 371 3097

Child Benefit

If you get Child Benefit, contact:

- Child Benefit Office: 0300 100 3100


Income Support, Universal Credit or another benefit

Tell the relevant benefits office.

Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction

Tell your local council.

The rules for each benefit are explained overleaf.



Education and childcare

Home to school transport – England [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND
contact For families with disabled children

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT – ENGLAND

Most children make their own way to school either accompanied by their parents, or independently if they are older. For some disabled children this may not be possible, either because their school is too far away, or because they are not able to walk or use public transport in the same way as other children. Local authorities must make free travel arrangements for these children.

THIS FACTSHEET WILL TELL YOU

- which children are eligible for free school transport
- what sort of transport can be provided
- how to apply for school transport
- how to challenge a school transport decision
- where to find out more.

This factsheet covers children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) in England only. References to children with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) also cover those who still have Statements under the old system.

LOCAL AUTHORITY DUTIES IN BRIEF

Local authorities must make travel arrangements they consider necessary to enable eligible children to attend school. These arrangements must be provided free of charge under section 508B of the Education Act 1996.

Local authorities also have the discretion under section 508C of the Education Act 1996 to provide transport for a wider group of children. This could be free or charged for.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Some criteria apply to all children, and pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) may be eligible under these. Others apply only to children with a disability, special need, or mobility difficulty.

Extra help in education for 19-25 year olds [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND
contact For families with disabled children

EXTRA HELP IN EDUCATION FOR 19-25-YEAR-OLDS

This factsheet is for parents/careers of young people with special educational needs aged between 19-25 in England. It describes the education options available for your son or daughter, and their right to extra help.

WHAT ARE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?

The law says "A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her".

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT 2014 SECTION 20.1

A child with special educational needs (SEN) may need more help, or a different kind of help, from that usually given to children of the same age.

A request can be made at any time before a young person's 19th birthday. See our factsheet Education, Health and Care needs assessments and Education, Health and Care plans for further information about the process.

IMPORTANT CHANGES UNDER THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT

- Further education colleges have the same duties as schools to use their best endeavours to provide extra support to learners with a special educational need or disability (SEND)
- young people with special educational needs can have an EHCP also if they need more educational support than a mainstream education setting could normally provide
- young people can express a preference for a mainstream or specialist college to be named on an EHCP plan, including a wide range of independent providers
- young people have a right to be consulted and to make their own decisions about the EHCP process, if they have the mental capacity to do this.

WHAT IS AN EHCP PLAN?

An EHCP plan is a legal document which outlines a child or young person to extra help so they can access education. Some young people will need an EHCP plan to finish their education or training. This is likely to be the case if they need more help with their education than a mainstream college can normally provide, and if they want previously supported through a Statement of Special Educational Needs in school or a Learning Difficulty Assessment in college.

Your son or daughter may not have had this support, or they may be wanting to education after a long break. If they may need an EHCP Plan to finish their education or training, you or your son or daughter can ask the local authority to carry out an EHCP needs assessment.

Free school meals – England & Wales [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND & WALES
contact For families with disabled children

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Many children of children are entitled to free school meals, but struggle to access or eat them because their disability or medical condition. This guide explains who is eligible to receive free school meals and the legislation that sets out the rules about when they receive meals at school.

The guide includes links to four sample letters. Parents can use to ask the school to provide free school meals to a new year child or return home.

Both the guide and the sample letters were written by the public law firm rights lawyers, John Keeble, Ross Campbell and Kaye Sheehan from Solicitors for Parents, of from Bristol, West of Bath, Chambers.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

Schools have a legal duty to make "reasonable adjustments" to their services for disabled children. This means that they must do what is necessary for a child to access their "core services" which are the basic things that are necessary for a child to attend school. This includes the provision of free school meals.


In deciding what is reasonable, the law requires schools to take into account the child's disability, the nature and extent of the child's disability, and the impact of the child's disability on the child's ability to access the school's services.

ASKING FOR A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

If your child is eligible for free school meals, you should be able to request a reasonable adjustment to the school's services. If you are not sure if your child is eligible, you should contact the school to find out more.

If you request the school to make a reasonable adjustment to its services, it should do so if it is reasonable to do so. If it is not reasonable, the school should explain why it is not reasonable and what it can do to help.

The school should also consider the child's disability and the impact of the child's disability on the child's ability to access the school's services.



CHILDREN IN RECEPTION, YEAR 1, OR YEAR 2 AT STATE SCHOOLS, ACADEMIES, AND FEES SCHOOLS

All children in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 who are on the pupil register at the school are entitled to free school meals.

- **state-maintained school**
- **academy**
- **free school**

The governing body of the school, including the head teacher, has a legal duty to provide them. This is the case whether the child is being educated at school or at home, including at home.

When a governing body or head teacher has a legal duty to provide them, this is the case whether the child is being educated at school or at home, including at home.

The school should also consider the child's disability and the impact of the child's disability on the child's ability to access the school's services.

Challenging school transport decisions – England [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND
contact For families with disabled children

CHALLENGING SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICIES – ENGLAND

The provision of home to school transport is governed by law, statutory guidance and local authorities' own policies. Local policies must offer at least the minimum legal entitlement. However, research as part of Contact's school transport campaign has shown that a number of policies do not comply with the law. We are also aware of parent groups who have successfully challenged potentially unlawful policies when they have been put out for consultation.

WHAT THIS FACTSHEET WILL TELL YOU

This factsheet will be useful to parent groups and individual parents who want to challenge a local school transport policy. It will help you understand:

- local authorities' duties with regard to transport policies
- the need for a consultation
- common issues on which a policy could be challenged.

For more details on transport eligibility see our factsheet on Home to school transport.

CHILDREN OF STATUTORY SCHOOL AGE (5-16)

The local authority must publish its school transport policy under the Education (School Arrangements) (England) Regulations. This must form part of the consultation process published annually for school admissions in the following year. The complete prospectus must be published by 12 September in the year before admission.

Statutory guidance from the Department for Education – Home to school travel and transport guidance – states that the information should:

- be clear and easy to understand
- give full information on travel and transport arrangements

• explain both statutory transport provision and that provided as a discretionary benefit

• set out the appeal process.

The law does not say how or when the local authority should consult on transport policies for the new year. However, Home to school travel and transport guidance recommends that local authorities consult widely on any changes to their school transport policy with all interested parties for at least 30 days during term time.

YOUNG PEOPLE OF SIXTH FORM AGE (16-19)


Under section 508B of the Education Act 1996, the local authority must publish a transport policy statement for 16-19-year-olds. This must be published by 1 May to take effect the next academic year (from September). Local authorities must have regard to statutory guidance (Home to school travel and transport guidance) when they draw up their local policy for this age group. There are legal requirements detailing who must be involved in the consultation including young people and their parents.

YOUNG ADULTS (18-24 YEAR-OLDS WITH AN EHCP PLAN)

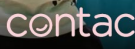
Under section 508C of the Education Act 1996, the local authority must publish a transport policy statement for "relevant young adults" who are entitled to transport under the school transport rules. Relevant young adults are defined as those under 25 with an EHCP plan the guidance however still uses the old terminology "subject to learning difficulty assessment". The policy must be published by 31 May to take effect the next academic year. There are legal requirements for who must be involved in the consultation, including relevant young adults and their parents.

A guide to dealing with bullying [online]

DEALING WITH BULLYING

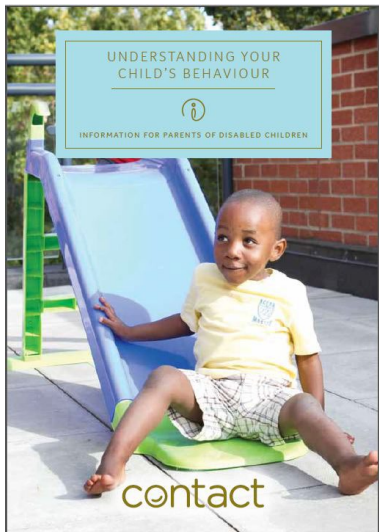


INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN



Behaviour

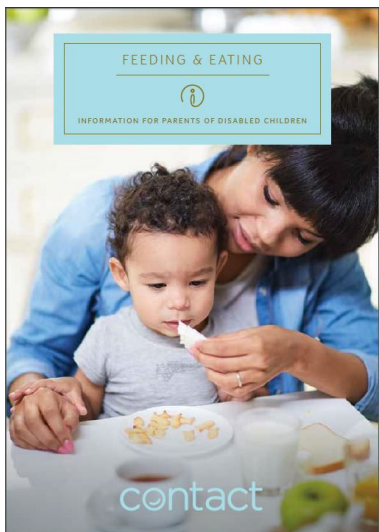
[Understanding your child's behaviour](#) [in print and online]



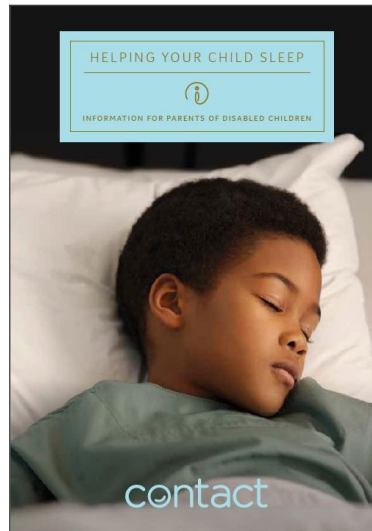
[Potty/Toilet training](#) [in print and online]



[Feeding and eating](#) [in print and online]



[Helping your child's sleep](#) [online]



Social care services

[Services and support from your local authority](#) – England [in print and online]

[Short breaks – help for you and your child to take a break](#) – England [online]

[Introduction to the Care Act 2014](#) – England [online]

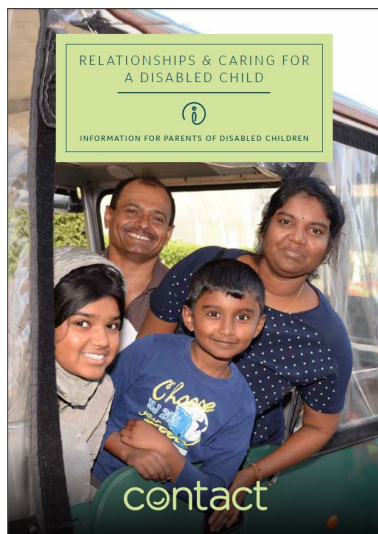
[Carers' assessments – help for parent carers](#) - England how parents can access their own support [online]

[Personal budgets in England](#) overview of personal budgets [online]

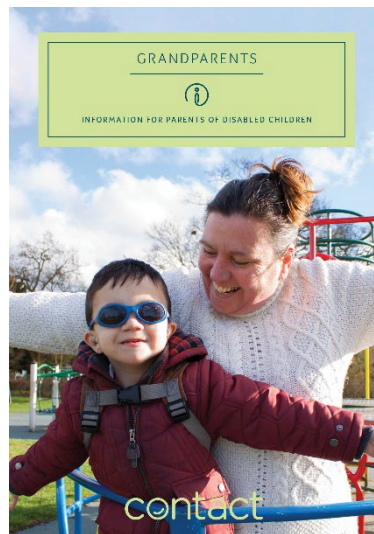
[Introduction to the Care Act 2014](#) – England [online]

Family Life

[Relationships and caring for a disabled child](#) [online]



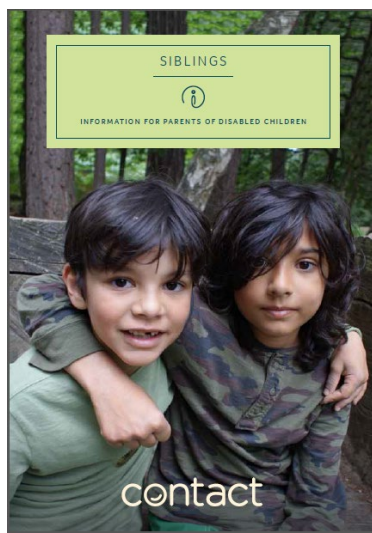
[Grandparents](#) – [online]



[Growing up, sex and relationships - for young disabled people](#) [online]



[Siblings: information and resources](#) [online]



[Practical support for bereaved parents](#) [online]



[Growing up, sex and relationships - for parents of young disabled people](#) [online]



Health

[Concerned about your child](#) Professionals who can help [in print and online]

contact For families with disabled children

Concerned about your child?

These people may be able to help

- Speech
- Feeding
- Coordination
- Teeth
- Toilet training
- Learning
- Behaviour
- Sleep

Contact working with The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

[Developmental Delay](#) - help for concerned parents, with developmental milestones [in print and online]

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN

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[Living with a rare condition](#) – for parents of children who have a rare condition [in print and online]

LIVING WITH A RARE CONDITION

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN

contact

[Living without a diagnosis](#) – if your child doesn't have a diagnosis or if you are waiting for one [in print and online]

LIVING WITHOUT A DIAGNOSIS

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN

contact

[GP annual health checks for children with learning difficulties](#) – how to access health support [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND, WALES **contact** For families with disabled children

GP ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This brochure is for parents of a child or young person with a learning disability. It has information on GP learning disability registers and annual health checks, why they are important and how you can support your child or young person to access the services they are entitled to.

GP LEARNING DISABILITY REGISTERS
GP learning disability registers are a record of all the people registered with the practice that have a learning disability. This is different to the Register of Disabled Children that all local authorities are required to keep. The GP learning disability register enables practice staff to identify children, young people and their families who may need extra help or support to access health services.

Anyone with a learning disability, regardless of whether they have a diagnosis of learning disability, can ask to go on it.

Other than the register should include all ages, not just those over 16.

All those on the register aged 14 and over should be offered an annual health check.

Being on the register will help GPs and practice staff understand the complexities of care for children and young people with learning disabilities. It can also help practice staff identify who they may need to make reasonable adjustments for.

WHAT ARE REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS?
Reasonable adjustments are the changes that services or people must make so that someone with a disability can use or access something just as easily as everyone else. Some examples of what a 'reasonable adjustment' might be are:

- making sure there is wheelchair access
- having a 'quiet' waiting room
- providing easy read appointment letters
- prioritising appointments or first appointments of the day if waiting is difficult

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING ON THE REGISTER?
The benefits of being on the Learning Disability Register include:

- being an annual health check, if 14 or over
- parent carers and siblings being identified as carers
- a better understanding of a child or young person's needs before they attend health or care settings
- improved visibility to adult services, so your GP will be aware of your young person's needs and can be involved in any planning.

[When your child is in hospital: making things more manageable](#) [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND, WALES **contact** For families with disabled children

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS IN HOSPITAL - MAKING THINGS MORE MANAGEABLE

Taking your child to hospital can be a worrying time, and it helps to have a plan about if you can. This booklet looks at making hospital appointments and admissions better.

FACE-TO-FACE APPOINTMENTS VERSUS VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS
Many hospitals and clinics are now offering virtual appointments. Virtual appointments are the same as face-to-face appointments, but you can attend from home. Virtual appointments can be a good option if your child has a condition that makes it difficult for them to travel to hospital. However, some conditions may require a face-to-face appointment. It's important to talk to your GP about the best option for your child's condition and what to bring to the appointment.

TELEHEALTH
Telehealth is a service where your appointment or visit is done by video. This can help reduce the time and stress of a hospital visit. Some hospitals offer telehealth services for children. It's important to talk to your GP about the best option for your child's condition and what to bring to the appointment.

WHAT IF MY CHILD DOESN'T WANT TO GO INTO HOSPITAL?
If a young person with a learning disability is going to hospital, it's important to have a plan. This plan should include how to get to hospital, what to bring, and how to stay calm. It's important to talk to your GP about the best option for your child's condition and what to bring to the appointment.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD
You can help your child to prepare for hospital by talking to your GP about the best option for your child's condition and what to bring to the appointment. You can also help your child to stay calm by using relaxation techniques and talking to them about what to expect.

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[Understanding your child's sensory needs](#) [online]

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S SENSORY NEEDS

This guide is based on Contact's parent workshop *Understanding Your Child's Sensory Needs*. Contact is a charity supporting families with disabled children.

MAKING SENSE OF SENSORY PROCESSING
Every moment, our brains are taking in messages from the world through our senses – sounds, sights, smells, movement, texture, and taste. For most of us, our brains automatically filter, organise, and respond to this information without us even thinking about it.

For some children, this process works differently. Their brains may be more responsive to certain inputs or need more sensory input to feel calm and focused. These differences are known as sensory processing differences or sensory integration differences.

This doesn't mean there's something wrong – it simply means that the child's sensory system works differently. Understanding their unique sensory profile can help you create an environment and routines that make daily life calmer and more enjoyable.

Examples:

- A child might cover their ears when a vacuum cleaner is on but seek loud music later.
- Another may dislike the feeling of certain clothes but enjoy being wrapped tightly in a blanket.
- Some children are so concerned and afraid of heat that not all children find it odd to be fearful when their feet leave the ground.

Our website has lots of information on common concerns like feeding and eating, helping your child sleep, and understanding your child's behaviour, including free resources for parents. Visit: [contact.org.uk/when-we-communicate](http://www.contact.org.uk/when-we-communicate)

[Guide to hearing care](#) for children with learning disability, autism or both

A Parents' Guide to hearing care for children with a learning disability, autism or both

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Reports and research

We publish a number of research, reports and campaign briefings, see www.contact.org.uk/research

Parent Carer Participation

To find information and resources for parent carer forums, see <http://www.contact.org.uk/pcp/resources>

For parent support groups

To find resources for local and national support groups, see <http://www.contact.org.uk/lgn>

[Guide to eye care](#) for children with learning disability, autism or both

A Parents' Guide to eye care for children with a learning disability, autism or both

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[Guide to dental care](#) for children with learning disability, autism or both

A Parents' Guide to oral health and dental care for children with a learning disability, autism or both

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