

contact

*For families
with disabled children*

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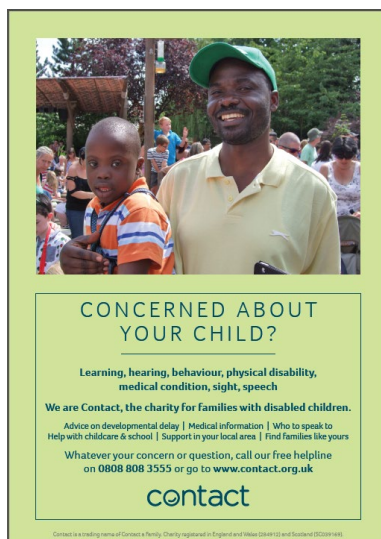
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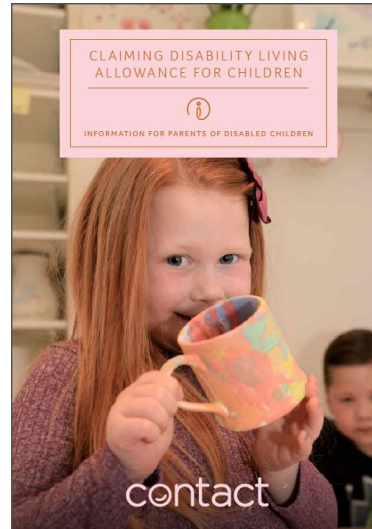


Money and finance

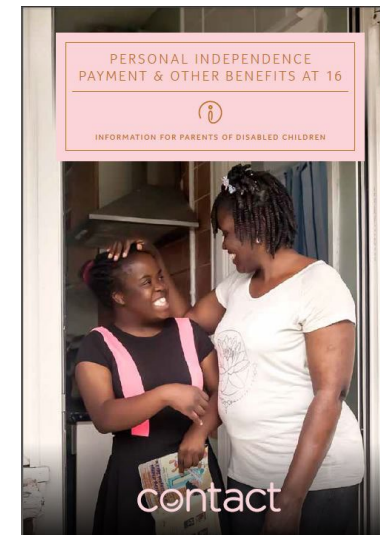
[Money Matters checklist– England/Wales](#)
[Money matters checklist –Scotland](#)
 Benefits and other financial support [online]



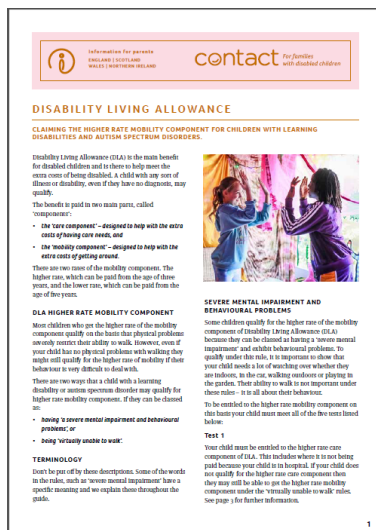
[Claiming Disability Living Allowance for children](#)
 How to fill in the form [online]



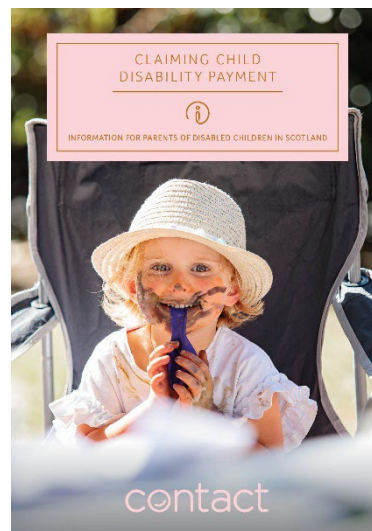
[Personal Independence Payment and other benefits at 16](#) [online]



[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]

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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 14 days (or 28 days if aged 16 or above) their DLA payments were suspended.

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

These rules have now been scrapped for children under 18 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 15th June 2017 in England, Wales and Scotland, and from the 6 July 2017 in Northern Ireland.

WHAT ARE THE NEW RULES?
Setting your own child in a hospital inpatient 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.

If someone is aged 16 or above and not claiming PIP when they are in hospital inpatient (and they do not already claim DLA or PIP when they are in hospital), you can still claim DLA or PIP when they are in hospital. This is because you are exempt from the rules restricting DLA/PIP payments to hospital.

If your child first claims DLA or PIP when they are in hospital, payments can start regardless of the fact that



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

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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)**.

Carer's Allowance is not means tested. It does not matter what we pay you and most forms of income are also ignored. However, if you work you can only get Carer's Allowance if your earnings after deductions are no more than £131 per week.

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR CARER'S ALLOWANCE?
You can claim if you are aged 16 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 benefit for older people with disabilities called Attendance Allowance
- you look after that person for at least 35 hours a week
- you are not earning more than £131 a week. See below for more details about how your earnings are calculated.
- you are not a full-time education. Generally you're treated as in full-time education if your course is described as full-time by the educational establishment, although there can be exceptions (for example you've been granted an exemption for part of your course if the course is not a traditionally 5-year course requiring three exams). Even if the course isn't described as full-time, you'll still be treated as being in full-time education if it involves 27 hours or more expected 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.

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 wages. This includes not only any tax and national insurance you pay but also deductions for:

- any alternative care costs that you have. This includes any childcare costs that you have when you are working whether this is for a disabled child or any other children under 16. If the person you care for is aged 16 or over and you have to pay someone to look after them while you work then those care costs can be deducted.
- There is a cap on the maximum amount that can be deducted in this way – this half of your net earnings.

There is no requirement that you pay a registered childcare provider. These costs can still be deducted to long as you pay someone other than a close relative:

- 50% per cent of any pension contributions that you make into work or personal pension schemes, and
- an amount for any expenses you have that are 'wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred' in carrying out your duties as a carer for which you are not reimbursed by your employer. For example if you have to buy equipment or specialist clothing, or if you have to pay for travel between work places (if not between work and home then not count).

If your earnings vary they are averaged out, although the period on 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 5 tax years, unless there has been a change in the pattern of your business.

Help with council tax bills

Factsheet – Universal Credit – the essentials [online]

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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 out of work and to those who are in employment. It is replacing most of the existing means-tested benefits for people of working age with a single monthly payment. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and some people are expected to claim it online.

WHICH BENEFITS ARE BEING REPLACED BY UNIVERSAL CREDIT?
Universal credits to gradually replace:

- Income Support
- Income-based jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit


• Housing Benefit for those in some types of supported accommodation).

There are known as the '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 cannot claim Universal Credit if you have three or more dependent children. Again that is, more people of working age can claim. You can claim regardless of whether you are out of work or in employment. You can claim if you are a job seeker, a carer, or someone who is unable to work. You must also meet certain other linked to your residence and presence in the UK.

WHAT AGE MUST I BE TO MAKE A CLAIM?
Usually claimants have to be aged 16 or over at the point their claim is made. However, there are some exceptions for young people who are aged 16 or over on the date that their claim is made. If your child is aged 16 or over on the date that their claim is made, they can claim Universal Credit. If someone is aged 16 or above and not claiming PIP when they are in hospital inpatient (and they do not already claim DLA or PIP when they are in hospital), you can still claim DLA or PIP when they are in hospital. This is because you are exempt from the rules restricting DLA/PIP payments to hospital.

If your child first claims DLA or PIP when they are in hospital, payments can start regardless of the fact that



WHAT ABOUT OTHER MONEY I HAVE?
Universal Credit is a means tested benefit, which means the amount that you receive depends on your income and what savings or other capital you have.

WHEN WILL I BE EXPECTED TO CLAIM UNIVERSAL CREDIT?
When Universal Credit was first introduced, you couldn't claim if you were looking after a disabled child, or if you were a disabled adult. However, this is slowly changing and those with disabled adults can be asked to claim Universal Credit if they live in an area where the Universal Credit 'roll out' has been introduced. In a full service area you will be expected to claim Universal Credit if:

- you have a change of circumstances that means you try and make a new claim for one of the legacy benefits, and
- you are not a parent with three or more dependent children.

For example, James is a single parent with two children who lives in a full service area. His 16-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter have both started to claim Income Support. She will be told that because the new full service area the council make a new claim for Income Support and must claim Universal Credit.


Help with Council Tax bills [online]

Information for Families in UK

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Help with council tax bills

For families with disabled children



Introduction

This guide is about the different schemes that exist for reducing your council tax bill. It is written for families who have a disabled child and the examples given apply mainly to those families, although other individuals may also qualify for help.

The three main schemes for reducing your council tax bill are outlined. It is possible to qualify for help from more than one of these schemes at the same time and it makes no difference whether you are a tenant or a homeowner.

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Help with council tax bills

Factsheet – Universal Credit – claiming for a young person [online]

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UNIVERSAL CREDIT – CLAIMING FOR A YOUNG DISABLED PERSON

Universal Credit is a new benefit for people aged between 16 and 64. It can be paid to people who are out of work and to those who are in employment. It is replacing most of the existing means-tested benefits for people of working age with a single monthly payment. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and some people are expected to claim it online.


Universal Credit is a means tested benefit for people of working age. This normally has to be aged at least 16 to claim Universal Credit, but special rules allow 16- and 17-year-olds to claim if either:

- they are submitting medical certificates from their GP or have established that they have a limited capability for work.
- they are not or daughter choose to claim Universal Credit then after the benefit that you receive. They will not be being treated as a dependent child of yours and the money that Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit or other payments that you receive for them as part of your family will stop.

If your child is aged 16- and stays in full-time non-advanced education you will still have a choice – either carry on claiming for them as part of your family to keep their claims Universal Credit to their own rights. They will need to weigh up which option is likely to leave your family better off.

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL CREDIT?
Universal Credit is a new benefit for people of working age. It can be paid to people who are in employment as well as to those who are not working. It is replacing most of the existing means-tested 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.

There are known as the legacy benefits.



WHICH BENEFITS ARE BEING REPLACED BY UNIVERSAL CREDIT?
Universal Credit has replaced some claims for the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

There are known as the legacy benefits.

Factsheet – Benefits if your child is in residential accommodation [online]

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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 school or college
- residential care home
- regular 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 benefit and Tax Credit offices when your child goes into residential care even if they only go to for a few nights in a 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/PIP: 0800 121 4000
- PIP: 0800 121 4000

Carer's Allowance
If you get Carer's Allowance, contact:

- Carer's Allowance Unit: 0800 271 2027

Child Tax Credit
If you get Child Tax Credit contact:

- The Credits Office: 0800 371 2007

Child Benefit
If you get Child Benefit contact:

- DLA/PIP: 0800 121 4000
- PIP: 0800 121 4000

Income Support, Universal Credit or another benefit
Tell the relevant benefit office.

Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction
Tell your local council.

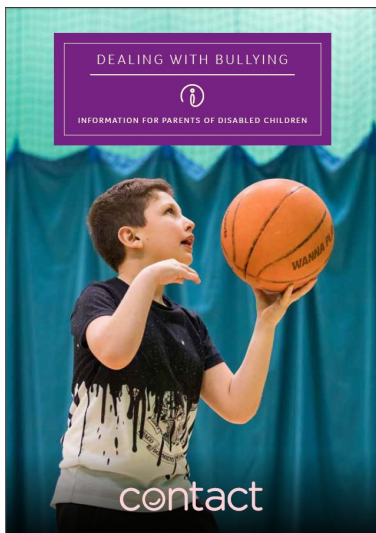
The rules for each benefit are explained overleaf.

Education and childcare

Childcare – how to access free childcare for two to four year olds [online]



A guide to dealing with bullying [online]



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/carers 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/she has a learning difficulty or disability which only 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.

In 2014, the Children and Families Act came into force. This law extended the special educational needs system to young people up to the age of 25. It also brought in Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) plans to replace statements.

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 reach 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 were 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 returning 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.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN 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 plan 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 in 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.

EDUCATION BEYOND 19 - WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Many young people with SEN will move on from their school or college at around age 16. Some may continue to a specialist or mainstream education setting, whilst others may continue their education outside a formal institution.

'Education' has a broad meaning for young people with SEN in this age group. It does not have to include studying for formal qualifications. Work experience or learning to do daily tasks independently can be part of an educational programme. A recent court case

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 (5-16) in England only. References to children with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) plans 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 this 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 people 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.

DISTANCE
 This applies if your child lives outside the statutory walking distance to their nearest suitable school. Statutory walking distance is defined as a mile for children under 6, and 1 mile for age 6 or over. The distance measured is the shortest route along which a child can walk in reasonable safety. This may not be the same as the driving route and may include footpaths.

UNSUITABLE WALKING ROUTE
 This applies if your child lives within the 2 or 1 mile limit but there is an unsafe walking route, or the route is the only route were along an unsafe busy road with no pavement.

CHILDREN WITH A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED, DISABILITY, OR MOBILITY DIFFICULTY
 If your child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of a special educational need, disability, or mobility problem, they will be entitled to the school transport, regardless of the distance they live from the school. An assessment must be made on the child's individual needs. Statutory guidance says:
 "Statutory transport requirements (eg. the statutory walking distance) should not be considered when assessing the needs of children eligible due to SEN and/or disability".
 This criterion applies to all children with SEND or mobility difficulties, not just children with EHCP plans or who attend special schools.

Some children may be unable to walk to school because of a physical disability or medical issues, for others there may be psychological or behavioural issues which may put a child at risk. Local authorities should consider whether a child can walk, alone or with an adult, and if it would be reasonable to expect a parent to accompany the child on foot. Age should also be taken

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 explain 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 formal 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 Information) (England) Regulations. This must form part of the composite prospectus published annually for school admissions in the following year. The composite 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 provisions and that provided as discretionary ones
- set out the appeal process.

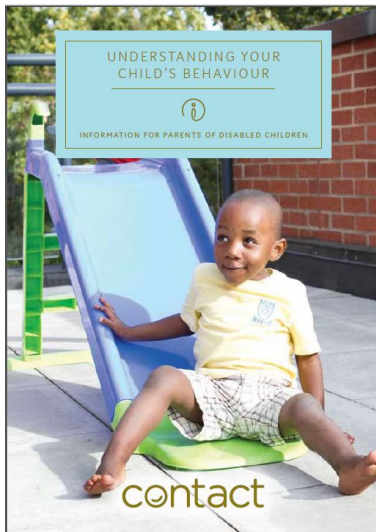
The law does not say how or when the local authority should consult on transport policies for the age group. However, Home to school travel and transport guidance recommends that local authorities consult widely on any changes to their school transport policy with all interested parties for at least 28 days during term time.

YOUNG PEOPLE OF SIXTH FORM AGE (16-18)
 Under section 508A of the Education Act 1996, the local authority must publish a transport policy statement for 16-18 year olds. This must be published by 13 May to take effect the next academic year (from September). Local authorities must have regard to statutory guidance that is relevant to education and training 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 508B of the Education Act 1996, the local authority must publish a transport policy statement for 'young people with SEN who are entitled to transport under the adult transport duty between young adults as defined as those under 25 with an EHCP plan'. The guidance however still uses the old terminology which is published by 13 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.

Behaviour

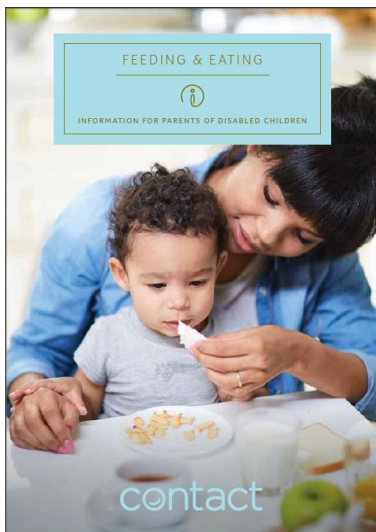
[Understanding your child's behaviour](#) [in print and online]



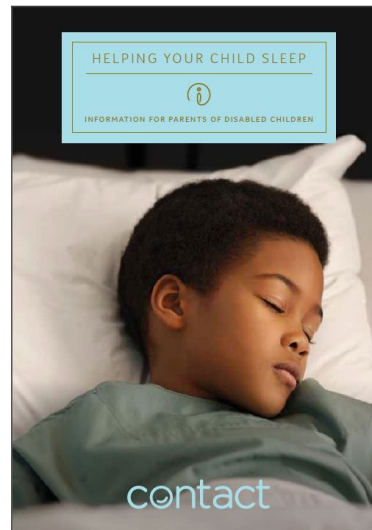
[Potty/Toilet training](#) [in print and online]



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

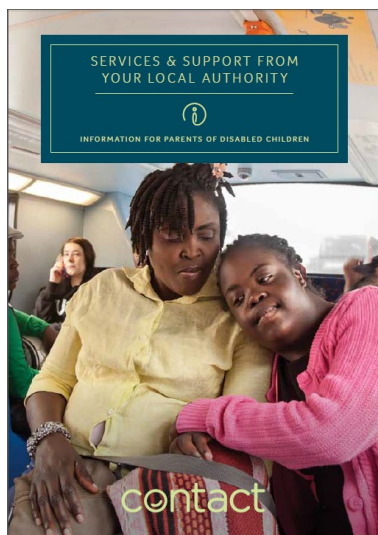


[Helping your child's sleep](#) [online]



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]

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SHORT BREAKS – HELP FOR YOU & YOUR CHILD TO TAKE A BREAK

Many families with disabled children and/or health conditions benefit from regular breaks from their caring responsibilities. Taking a break from caring for your child can be an admission of failure or a sign of giving up on your care. A break is an opportunity to recharge batteries, spend time with others or pursue a particular interest. A break may also allow your child to have a change of scene. Different experiences, new fun and make friends. This may contribute to your child's personal and social development and reduce social isolation. It can also be helpful to get your child used to spending time in different settings and with other people as they grow up. In the event you need to leave them with someone in the future.

WHAT ARE SHORT BREAKS?
Local authorities have legal duties to provide breaks for carers and disabled children, called 'short breaks' and make it clear how families with disabled children can access them – short breaks come in a variety of formats. Each one can last from just a few hours to a few days, and occasionally longer, depending on the type of provision and the needs of your child and family. Short breaks can include:

- Day care at home** – This includes sitting or care assistant schemes, which provide someone to sit with or 'stand' your child while you do another activity. They can also be useful to preparing children and parents for overnight placement in a care home.
- Overnight short breaks** – Taken in your own home, or an overnight sitting or nursing service if your child needs it – this may include a hospice at home service for children with complex disabilities and palliative care needs.
- Day care away from home** – This includes summer playgroups, after school and weekend clubs, young clubs, summer holiday play schemes, sports activities, day camps, holiday camps, residential camps, music, art and drama activities.
- Residential breaks** – Where your child stays in a residential home, special unit or hospital or hospice – typically one offers both indoor and outdoor activities as well as having staff to provide nursing care and support as needed.

Family link schemes – Where your child stays with another family on a regular basis or occasionally.

Support for disabled children/young people – To access recreation or cultural services, for example with the support of a befriender, sitting or personal care.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY ABOUT SHORT BREAKS?
The Carers (Recognition) Regulations, 1996 creates a right for disabled children to receive social care services, including short breaks, when their care is assessed to be necessary to meet their needs. Under this Act, the duty to provide services to the individual disabled child and does not extend to other members of the family.

Introduction to the Care Act 2014 – England [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND **contact** For families with disabled children

INTRODUCTION TO THE CARE ACT 2014 – ENGLAND

The Care Act 2014 came into force on 1 April 2015. The Act is accompanied by new regulations and statutory guidance, which replace the previous provisions for providing support and services for disabled adults aged 18 or over and their carers. The Act also includes new rights for families with a child who may need support to prepare for the transition to adult services, and also young carers who are approaching adulthood. Child carers for young people may need to get services or direct payments to meet their own assessed needs.

The aim of the Care Act 2014 is to get a full picture of the person and what needs and goals they have. The local authority will then consider whether any of the needs identified are eligible for support.

The detail on how local authorities implement the Act and regulations is in the **Care and support statutory guidance**. But local authorities should also make available information about the process. Contact your local authority or visit their website for further information.

Changes to funding for care and eligibility will come into force later in April 2016.

DUTIES ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES
Local authorities have legal duties when they make any decisions in a carer's assessment. These duties also apply when they plan for a young person's transition to adult services, and for a disabled adult's care and support needs. Under the Act the local authority must promote the wellbeing of disabled adults and their carers.

This means they must consider a person's:

- personal dignity and respect
- physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- prevention from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over their care and support, and the way support is provided to the individual)
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing

They must also:

- provide or arrange services that will contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing a person's need for care and support.
- provide or arrange services that will contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing a person's need for care and support.
- provide or arrange services that will contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing a person's need for care and support.
- provide or arrange services that will contribute towards preventing, delaying or reducing a person's need for care and support.

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

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CARERS ASSESSMENTS – HELP FOR PARENT CARERS

All parent carers have a right to ask for an assessment of their needs at any time. The aim of a carer's assessment is to give you a chance to tell social services about the things that could make looking after your child easier for you. This may result in getting services or direct payments to meet your assessed needs.

A carer's assessment focuses on you as a parent and your needs. Social services should discuss issues like the help you need, and whether there is anyone else who helps or cares for your child's care.

The carer's assessment should also consider your wellbeing, including health and safety issues, and important concerns like relationships and employment.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS
Parents of disabled children (called parent carers in the legislation), young people and young carers have a strengthened right to an assessment of their needs under the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Children and Families Act amended the Children Act 1989 (sections 20, 21 and 21A) under it, local authorities must consider a parent's:

- personal dignity and respect
- physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- prevention from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day-to-day life
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing
- domestic, family and personal relationships
- substantial living accommodation
- contributions to society

Assessment under the Children Act 1989 can lead to the provision of services which support families, including short breaks. The assessment is the process social services use to gather information about your child and family, so they can make a decision about what help you may need. The Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance emphasises the importance of the assessment being child and family centred. The approach should also be to be addressing the child's needs within their family and wider community.

Personal budgets in England overview of personal budgets [online]

Information for parents ENGLAND **contact** For families with disabled children

PERSONAL BUDGETS

A personal budget sets out the amount of money that is available to spend to support your child. To meet their assessed needs. This money may come from your local social services, social education department, or it may come from your NHS clinical commissioning group (CCG). If you receive funding from the NHS it is known as a personal health budget.

Having a personal budget should mean that it matches closer what money is available to fund the support that your child has been assessed as needing. It should also mean that you can have more involvement in deciding how that money should be spent.

Having a personal budget does not mean that your child will get any extra funding. However, it should mean that you have more say in how the money that has been allocated is spent. In some circumstances you may have the option of getting direct payments, which you can use to buy support for your child rather than have this arranged for you.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A PERSONAL BUDGET?
In principle, having a personal budget should provide your family with more choice and control over how your child's needs are met. You should:

- have more say in what outcomes you want to achieve for your child as well as how the care package will be funded
- have more involvement in creating a plan for how your child's needs will be met
- have a choice over how the money funding support for your child is used and managed, including in some circumstances, the right to use for a direct payment so you can buy and manage these services yourself
- have more say in how the money is spent and this money you would have all the legal responsibility of an employer.

HOW MUCH CONTROL WILL I HAVE OVER MY CHILD'S PERSONAL BUDGET?
There are four different ways a personal budget can be managed. The amount of control that you have over how your child's needs are met will vary depending on which of these options are used.

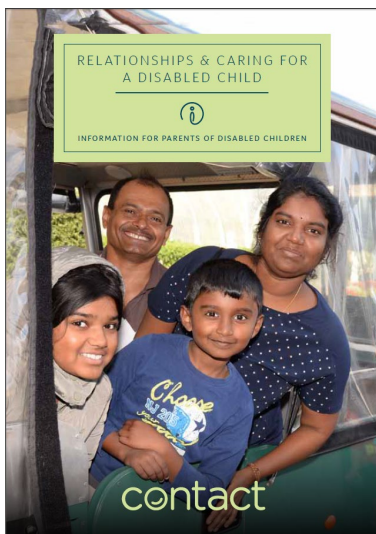
DIRECT PAYMENTS
This is where you receive the money yourself so you can buy the support for your child needs. Using direct payments means you will have a lot more control and choice over how your child's needs are met. However, it also involves more responsibility for you in managing these services.

You may decide to use direct payments to buy a service from a provider, for example a care agency, or to use a money trust or short break service. Alternatively you may decide to employ someone to support your child and this money you would have all the legal responsibility of an employer.

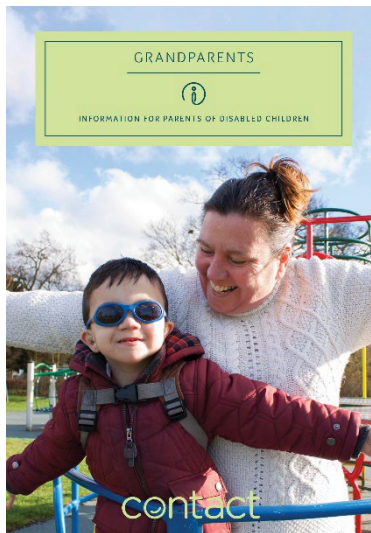
Every local authority has a system that there is a service in both ways identify what and information on setting up and managing direct payments. You should be able to find out more about it by contacting your local authority.

Family Life

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



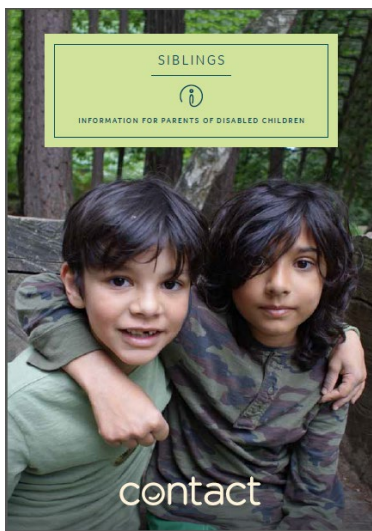
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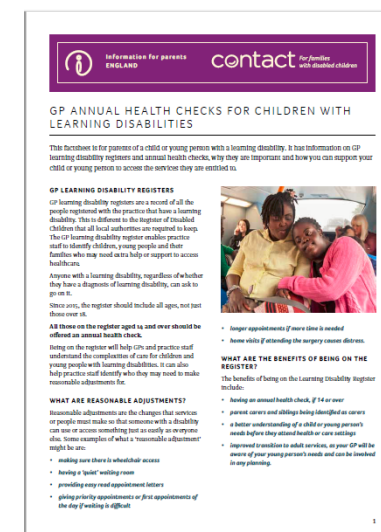
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[Living with a rare condition](#) – for parents of children who have a rare condition [in print and online]



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

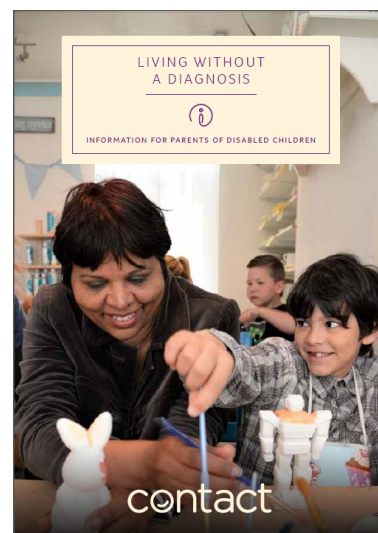


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[Living without a diagnosis](#) – if your child doesn't have a diagnosis or if you are waiting for one [in print and online]



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>

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