

# Supporters' Update

August 2007

**contact** a family  
for families with disabled children  
incorporating  
**The Lady Hoare Trust**

## £340m package for families caring for disabled children

Thanks to concerted lobbying by the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign - including Contact a Family - Ed Balls MP, then Economic Secretary and Lord Adonis, SEN and Disability Minister within the Department for Education and Skills have announced the most substantial funding package ever for families with disabled children living in England.



From 2008 to 2011, £340m will be invested in services for disabled children, with the lion's share, £280m, being spent on short breaks for families who have children with severe disabilities.

The package will also include:

- £35m for accessible childcare (to be piloted in 10 Local Authorities);
- £19m to ease transition from child to adult services;
- £5m to involve parents in shaping local services.

**Currently, only one of 13 families get any form of specialist support in caring for their disabled child**

"As founder members of the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign, we've lobbied long and hard for this funding, so it's very good news," said Contact a Family Director of External affairs, Jill Harrison.

"The pot's large enough to begin a transformation of families' lives - but now the challenge is to make sure the money is spent where it is most needed in consultation with parents, disabled children and young people."

**Contact a Family Wales** is one of four organisations leading a new campaign, **Disabled Children Matter Wales**, to make sure the Welsh Assembly Government acts on its promise to make disabled children and young people a priority. Based on the successful **Every Disabled Child Matters** campaign in England the campaign wants all disabled children and their families to have the right to the services and support they need to lead ordinary lives.

## Blue Badges For Babies And Toddlers In Scotland

In Scotland, children under two years of age will now be eligible for a Blue Badge. The Scottish Executive has amended the regulations and the new criteria have been announced. Children under two will be eligible if:

- They're accompanied by bulky medical equipment which can be kept in a vehicle, but can't be carried around without great difficulty; or
- They must always be near a vehicle so they can be treated for their condition in the vehicle, or need to be taken quickly in the vehicle to somewhere they can be treated.



*Helen's daughter, Mia, in her hip cast which goes from her chest down to her ankles with a bar between her legs.*

This comes after we reported in the last issue of Supporters' Update on the campaign, supported by Contact a Family, by two mothers in England to get the blue disabled parking badges for their daughters.

The parents are not entitled to the badges due to their girls' age and type of disability. Currently in England, families whose children are under two years old do not qualify and those who have a disability lasting less than three years are not eligible.

**"We were amazed when we found out that our children weren't eligible for a Blue Badge despite the fact that it was completely impossible to get them in or out of a car in a normal car parking space."**

However, the Government is currently consulting on new regulations to enable Blue Badges to be issued to the under 2's.

# Supporters' Update

## Chief Executive Moves To Heart Of Government

Contact a Family's Chief Executive, Francine Bates OBE, has been appointed as Special Adviser to Ed Balls - the new Secretary of State for Children, Families and Schools. Unfortunately, this has meant that she has had to resign with immediate effect.

Although this is sad news for Contact a Family, we feel sure that parents and those working with them will join us in wishing Francine every success in her new role.

Chair of Trustees, Rosey Foster commented, "This is a wonderful opportunity for Francine, who will be able to use her expertise at the heart of Government."



## A New Deal for Carers?

The Government has launched a major consultation on how to improve the lives of the nation's 6 million carers.

National and local events, to be held across the country, and a dedicated website - [www.newdealforcarers.org](http://www.newdealforcarers.org) - will ask; "What would make a positive difference or improve your life as a carer?"

The consultation will ask what changes are needed on a wide range of topics, including:

- Who do you want to value you as a carer and how?
- What money issues are most important to you?
- What could change to help you do things outside of caring eg. work, education, leisure
- What about issues with transport?
- Is there any training that you think would improve your life as a carer?

Imelda Redmond, Contact a Family Trustee, said the consultation presented a 'once in a decade opportunity' for carers to get their voices heard.

Jill Harrison, Director of External Affairs at Contact a Family said, 'The government is right to want to listen to carers - and parents and carers of disabled children need to be part of this.'

To ensure the unique concerns and needs of parents with disabled children are central to the government's vision for caring for the next decade, Contact a Family is spreading the word about this debate.

## Reception To Celebrate 10th Anniversary Of Volunteering

Baroness Jill Pitkeathley will host a Reception at the House of Lords in September to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Contact a Family's volunteer Parent Representative Scheme.

The reception will be attended by Parent Reps from past and present as well as some of Contact a Family's Patrons.

Contact a Family currently has 28 volunteer Parent Representatives across the UK whose role is to help make sure that local families of disabled children can access the support and information they need.

***'I'm not just sympathising with people. I've been through it too and really understand...I truly know what it is like.'***

They are all parents of disabled children themselves, some with quite complex and rare conditions, with a great knowledge of the day-to-day issues confronting parents and access to a wide range of information on local services, voluntary organisations and useful sources of help. They all volunteer their time and energies for free to help other parents.



Baroness Jill Pitkeathley

Contact a Family set up the scheme back in 1997 with a team of 11 volunteers. Many Representatives go on to find employment in social care, thanks to the skills they have acquired as part of their role with Contact a Family.



Contact a Family's 11 original volunteer Parent Representatives, with former staff members Harry Marsh (back row, far right) and Pauline Shelley (far left)

## FUNdraising Round-up

Best of luck to **WENDY WOOLNOUGH** who heads off to Peru in October to take part in a 'challenge of a lifetime' in aid of Contact a Family. Wendy's adventure involves 4 days of trekking along the Inca Trail reaching an altitude of over 4,000m before arriving at Machu Picchu. Wendy hopes to raise over £2,600.



*The lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu in Peru*

Congratulations to **JACQUELINE STONEHOUSE**, Contact a Family's first ever participant in the **EDINBURGH MARATHON** in May. Jacqueline, from Paisley, successfully completed the course in under 6 hours and raised a massive £2,200.

This year's **HYDRO ACTIVE WOMEN'S 5K CHALLENGE** takes place on Sunday 16th September in 3 locations - London, Liverpool and Birmingham. Last year we had a team of 22 runners and we're hoping to top that this year. Entry costs £15 and there's no minimum sponsorship requirement. Contact Gemma on 020 7608 8733 or [gemma.turner@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:gemma.turner@cafamily.org.uk) for more information.

Many thanks to **KATE JACKSON'S SCHOOL OF DANCING** which held its 40<sup>th</sup> end of term show in March to raise money for Contact a Family. Kate Jackson began supporting the Lady Hoare Trust 40 years ago. We were delighted that her loyalty to families with disabled children meant her support has carried on after the Trust merged with Contact a Family in 2004. This year, the show raised £1,000 from refreshments and a raffle, which means we have received an amazing £40,000 over the years.

Congratulations to **AMANDA HEPPLER**, **MARY PICKLES** and Contact a Family Trustee **JOLANTA LASOTA** who all ran in the **BRITISH 10K LONDON RUN** in July. Collectively they have so far raised £500.

Many thanks once again to the organisers of this year's **SHERBORNE CASTLE COUNTRY FAIR** which took place on May Bank Holiday. Contact a Family is the major beneficiary of the annual Fair and this year is set to receive £10,000 from the proceeds of the day.

### And finally....

A huge 'thank you' and 'well done' to all 8 runners who took part in the **2007 LONDON MARATHON** in April. Fastest finisher from the Contact a Family team was **CAMILLA PARKER** who completed the 26 miles in an impressive 4 hours 17 mins. Sponsorship money is still coming in but the total raised by the team is expected to be over £10,000 - a fantastic amount! We're already looking for people to take part in the 2008 Marathon, so if you're interested in joining the team, contact Gemma on 020 7608 8733.



*Contact a Family runners Leanne Howells (left) and Martin Davies (right) take on the London Marathon*

**Don't forget, if you have secured a place in an event or are organising an event of your own and would like to raise sponsorship for Contact a Family, contact us on 020 7608 8733.**

# Supporters' Update



**Stand Up For a Good Cause!**

**Monday 17th September, 8pm**  
**The Comedy Store, London, SW1**  
**Tickets £16**

**family**  
investments

Contact a Family's annual comedy night fundraiser returns on Monday 17th September. Last year's event was a complete sell-out and raised over £8,000, making it the most successful to date.

Eight well renowned acts from the comedy circuit will generously donate their time (and jokes!) for free and 'stand up for a good cause', giving you a night to remember!



We are delighted to welcome back **Brian Higgins** (left); the '*people's favourite comedian*' (The Stage). His '*daft but very funny*' performances (The Guardian) and energetic delivery have made him '*one of Scotland's finest comedians*' (The Comedy Club). His achievements also include a recent starring role in the BBC's '*A Funny Business*.'

Brian, whose son has a rare syndrome, will once again be joined by comedy legend **Arthur Smith** (right), who will comere the evening.



Family Investments are kindly sponsoring the night, enabling us to guarantee that every penny of the ticket sales goes to help families with disabled children.

**Tickets cost £16 and are available from [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk) or 0207 608 8733.**

**We sold out last year, so book early to avoid disappointment!**

Don't forget you can sign up to get future editions of **Supporters' Update** electronically. Not only will you be helping the environment but also saving us printing and mailing costs, which means more of your donations go directly on providing services for disabled children and their families across the UK.

Sign up now by emailing us at [fr.team@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:fr.team@cafamily.org.uk) with 'supporters update' in the subject line and including your details and Supporter Reference number.

We will then send you an email when the next edition is published, with a link to a PDF version of the newsletter which you can then read online or download and read at a more convenient time.

**Contact a Family** 209-211 City Road London EC1V 1JN **Tel** 020 7608 8700 **Fax** 020 7608 8701  
**Textphone** 0808 808 3556 **e-mail** [info@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:info@cafamily.org.uk) **Web** [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)  
**Helpline** 0808 808 3555 Freephone for parents and families (10am-4pm, Mon-Fri & 5.30-7.30pm Mon only)

© Contact a Family 2007

Designed by Claire Watson. Printed by Instant Print West One.

Registered Office 209-211 City Road London EC1V 1JN Registered Charity Number 284912  
Company limited by guarantee Registered in England and Wales No 1633333 VAT Reg No GB 749 3846 82