

**contact** a family  
for families with disabled children



## Holidays, play and leisure



Information for families

Incorporating **The Lady Hoare Trust**

UK

# Introduction

Many disabled children and young people say that leisure and play – after school, in the holidays and at weekends – is the most important missing element in their lives. Parents strive to make opportunities for these but often find many unnecessary barriers, including a basic lack of information about what’s available.

This guide provides some information about what play and leisure options may be available, where to find more information and suggests ways access for disabled children can be improved. It also has information about arranging holidays for disabled children and details of organisations which provide grants for these types of activities.

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## Your child's rights

Parents may find it helpful to know that disabled children and young people have certain rights relating to play and leisure.

Under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

### Local authority duties to disabled children

Services for disabled children are available under Section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and under the Children Act 1989. These Acts apply to England and Wales only but there is similar legislation for Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Wales, there are currently proposals to introduce new, wide-ranging legislation to cover social services under the Social Services (Wales) Bill.

Under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, services are provided to the individual disabled child and do not extend to other members of the family. Subject to criteria, services include:

- provision of leisure facilities (this could mean outings or a placement at a day centre), or
- education facilities (this could mean home-based education, or funding for the personal care requirements of students so they can study)
- travel and other assistance, like travel to and from a day centre
- holidays.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**



The Children Act 1989 sets out a range of support services which should be available. Services listed in the Act include:

- occupational, social, cultural or recreational activities
- assistance to enable your child and family to have a holiday
- travel assistance.

Also under the Children Act, local authorities have a general legal duty to make a range of services available to help children in the area. Importantly, the Act allows social services to provide help which will benefit other family members, like siblings and other carers.

## Please note

Throughout this guide we use the term local authority or LA when referring to departments like social services, sometimes known as 'children with disabilities teams' or 'children's services'.

The Act recognises that children's need for good-quality play opportunities change as they grow up. And they need these opportunities throughout childhood to reach and maintain their highest development and well being.

The Act says that local authorities (LAs) shall provide services to minimise the effect of disabilities on the lives of disabled children and give them opportunities to lead as normal a life as possible. LAs must treat disabled children as children first and promote access for all children to the same range of services.

See our guides *Disabled children's services in England and Wales* and *Disabled children's services – Scotland* to find out how to access leisure activities from your local authority. You will need to contact your local social services department and ask for an assessment of yours and your child's needs. Families in Northern Ireland can contact our freephone helpline for further information.

## England

In England, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 means local authorities in England need to take more responsibility to make fun and positive activities available for all young people.

Also, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a framework to support the welfare, learning and development of children from birth to five years old. The Early Years Foundation Stage promotes opportunities for both indoor and outdoor play.

## Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has a Play Strategy. Also, under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, local authorities have a legal duty to secure enough play opportunities for children, and must take into account disabled children's needs.

## Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Executive has approved a Play and Leisure Implementation Plan which identifies what needs to happen so that children and young people have more play and leisure opportunities.

## Scotland

The Early Years Framework in Scotland emphasises the importance of play in improving children's quality of life, including the need to remove any barriers to play as a priority. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland. GIRFEC highlights the opportunity to take part in play, recreation and sport, which helps healthy growth and development at home and in the community.

## Short Breaks

### England

In England, the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 places a legal duty on local authorities to provide a range of short breaks services for local disabled children.

As part of this duty, local authorities had to produce a 'Short Breaks Services Statement' by 1 October 2011. This statement should include information on:

Children's need for good quality play opportunities change as they grow up but they need such opportunities throughout childhood to reach and maintain their optimum development and well being.

**The Children Act (1989)**

- what local short break services are available
- how the services are designed to meet the needs of carers in their area, and
- details of any eligibility criteria the local authority applies to short breaks services.

### Wales

In Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government have included short breaks as a key issue in 'We are on the Way: A Policy Agenda to Transform the lives of Disabled Children and Young People'. The government will be introducing a new legal duty on local authorities to provide short breaks under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations 2012.

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## Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPSNI) is currently reviewing short break provision.

## Scotland

The Scottish government has pledged to prioritise improvements and greatly increase numbers of short breaks for all age groups. An extra £3 million will be available in 2012 – 2013 for short breaks, to be distributed through voluntary organisations. The emphasis is increasingly on self-directed support which gives families greater control over their child's care.

If you are unsure what is happening in your area, contact your local social services department and ask what help is available.

## Protection against discrimination related to being disabled

In **England, Wales** and **Scotland**, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection against disability discrimination in several areas of life, including service providers who provide goods, facilities and services. This would cover, for example:

- hotel accommodation
- cinemas
- leisure centres
- parks
- railway stations, and
- holiday clubs.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for service providers to discriminate against disabled people and treat them less favourably because they are disabled. The Act includes a

legal duty on service providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to allow a disabled person to use their services.

This means service providers must take positive steps to make sure disabled people can access their services in a way that is as close as reasonably possible to the access enjoyed by non-disabled people. What is considered a 'reasonable adjustment' for a large organisation may be different than a 'reasonable adjustment' for a small organisation.

The Act also provides protection from harassment and victimisation. If you think your child is being harassed or bullied, please call our helpline for a copy of our *Guide to dealing with bullying: for parents of disabled children*.

In **Northern Ireland**, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provides protection from disability discrimination in the supply of goods, facilities and services.

## Need advice about your rights?

If you feel that your child has been discriminated against when trying to use play and leisure facilities then ring our freephone helpline. We can also advise you on any other aspect of your rights and help, such as grants to pay for activities or holidays.

## Play and leisure in your area

### Who to ask about services

In England and Wales, the Childcare Act 2006 means your local Family Information Service can provide parents



of disabled children with details of services available. This includes information about play and leisure. Your school or children's centre may also have access to this information. Or call Contact a Family's freephone helpline.

If you want to know more about leisure facilities and clubs in your area, you could also contact a local parent support group or carers centre. Some run their own activities and, if not, may know who does. Our freephone helpline can check if there is a group in your area. You can also ask your child's social worker or, if you don't have one, contact the local children with disabilities team. You can also find information at:

- your local library
- your local council website, (that usually has information on local activities with accessibility information)
- a local leisure or youth service for details of inclusive facilities
- specialist sports clubs
- national umbrella organisations (see pages 8 and 18)
- a national organisation, such as Phab

(see page 9) or Special Olympics (see page 12).

## Help paying for leisure activities

### Direct Payments

Local authorities can give payments instead of services to allow disabled people and carers to buy in the services they have been assessed as needing; for example, for your child to attend a local club or play scheme. Direct Payments are intended to promote the independence of parents and their disabled children who would like to manage their own social care needs.

Phone our freephone helpline for more information on what Direct Payments can be used for on 0808 808 3555.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

You are entitled to a Direct Payment to meet your child's assessed need in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England.

### **How much are Direct Payments?**

The amount of money you get should be enough to allow you to meet all costs, including tax and national insurance, as well as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) police check.

Contact our freephone helpline for further information.

### **Contacts for information about play and leisure**

There are many national bodies and organisations which provide information about play and leisure opportunities for disabled children:

**Playmatters** (previously National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries)  
8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE  
Web: [www.ncb.org.uk/play-matters](http://www.ncb.org.uk/play-matters)

A national body for toy and leisure libraries, who loan of a wide range of toys, provide play sessions for children and parents and a friendly meeting place for parents and carers.

Their work in Scotland has been set up as a separate charity:

### **Smart Play Network**

Gilmerton Community Centre  
4 Drum Street, Edinburgh EH17 8QG  
Tel: 0131 664 2746  
Web: [www.smartplaynetwork.org](http://www.smartplaynetwork.org)

### **KIDS**

49 Mecklenburgh Square  
London WC1N 2NY  
Tel: 020 7520 0405  
Web: [www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)

KIDS offer practical help and support to disabled children, young people and their families across England, including specialist nurseries and crèches, short breaks, play schemes, youth groups and sibling support groups, plus training (for example Makaton) and keyworking for parents.



## **Phab England and Wales**

Summit House, 50 Wandle Road  
Croydon CR0 1DF  
Tel: 020 8667 9443  
Web: [www.phab.org.uk](http://www.phab.org.uk)

Charity dedicated to inclusive clubs, holidays, annual summer programmes of activities, sailing, short breaks and adventure holidays for disabled and non-disabled children.

## **FABB Scotland (Facilitating Access and Breaking Barriers)**

Norton Park, 57 Albion Road  
Edinburgh EH7 5QY  
Tel: 0131 475 2313  
Web: [www.fabb.org.uk](http://www.fabb.org.uk)

Charity dedicated to inclusive clubs, holidays, annual summer programmes of activities, sailing, short breaks and adventure holidays for disabled and non-disabled children.

## **Mencap Wales Play our Way**

Wales Learning Disability  
freephone helpline: 0808 808 1111  
Web: [www.mencap.org.uk/wales/projects](http://www.mencap.org.uk/wales/projects)

A project to improve access to leisure facilities for young people with a learning disability in Wales. Young ambassadors assess how accessible leisure activities are for young people with a learning disability, and work with service providers to improve them.

## **Stagetext**

First Floor, 54 Commercial Street  
London E1 6LT  
Tel: 020 7377 0540  
Web: [www.stagetext.org](http://www.stagetext.org)

Stagetext provides captioning and live speech-to-text services in theatres and other arts and cultural venues for people with varying types of deafness. They list performances where there will be a Stagetext service on their website.

## **VocalEyes**

VocalEyes, First Floor  
54 Commercial Street, London E1 6LT  
Tel: 020 7375 1043  
Web: [www.vocaleyeyes.co.uk](http://www.vocaleyeyes.co.uk)

VocalEyes is a nationwide audio description charity. It captures the visual elements of a theatre piece, painting, or environment that a blind or partially-sighted person might otherwise miss and describes them in clear, vivid language, providing access to the arts for blind and partially-sighted people. Their website has listings of performances and other events VocalEyes will be at.

## **Indoor play resources**

### **Sensory Toy Warehouse**

Web: [www.sensorytoywarehouse.com](http://www.sensorytoywarehouse.com)

Website set up by a parent which stocks accessibly-priced, tactile, interactive and stimulating multi-sensory resources, special needs toys and extraordinary novelties for disabled children. Prices start from under £1.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## **The Letterbox Library**

Unit 151 Stratford Workshops  
Burford Road, Stratford, London E15 2SP  
Tel: 0207 503 4801  
Web: [www.letterboxlibrary.com](http://www.letterboxlibrary.com)

Has a catalogue of disability-related books for children with disabilities and their siblings, and for use in school or other settings, that promote understanding and explain 'difference' for all ages from babies to twelve and over.

## **Calibre Audio Library**

Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5XQ  
Tel: 01296 432 339  
Web: [www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk)

UK charity that lends audio books through a free, nationwide postal service. Young Calibre is a free postal library bringing the fun of audio books for anyone under 16 who can't see properly, or has dyslexia or another disability which makes it difficult to read ordinary print. Over 16s can join the main library.

## **ITV Signed Stories**

Web: [www.signedstories.com](http://www.signedstories.com)



Signed Stories helps improve the literacy of deaf children from infancy upwards by allowing them to share in the joy of storytelling. The website also provides useful advice and guidance for parents, carers and teachers of deaf children, and for the deaf parents of hearing children.

The books below are available by searching on the internet (where you will find lots of other suggestions) or by contacting the publishers:

*Small Steps Forward – Using Games and Activities to help your pre-school child with Special needs* by Sarah Newman, 2008, ISBN: 978-1-84310-693-7

Lots of ideas for games and activities for pre-school children.

*Can't Play Won't Play – Simply Sizzling Ideas to get the Ball Rolling for Children with Dyspraxia* by Sharon Drew and Elizabeth Atter, 2008, ISBN: 978-1-84310-601-2

Both of the above books are available from Jessica Kingsley publishers, along with many other books for parents of disabled children, or for children themselves. Tel: 020 8994 6477  
Web: [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com)

*Play for Children with Special Needs, 3-9*, (2nd edition) by Christine Macintyre, Routledge, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-0415558839

How to understand the benefits of play and how to adapt different scenarios to support children who don't find it easy to play.



## Disability sport

To get involved in disability sport contact one of the following organisations:

### Wheelpower

Stoke Mandeville Stadium  
Guttmann Road, Stoke Mandeville  
Buckinghamshire HP21 9PP  
Tel: 01296 395995  
Web: [www.wheelpower.org.uk](http://www.wheelpower.org.uk)

WheelPower promotes equality for all people with physical disabilities around the UK by organising fun, introductory and competitive events for children and adults with disabilities. They list sports and where you can find your nearest centre to play them. They also run a number of events, including youth sport camps.

### Scottish Disability Sport

Caledonia House, South Gyle  
Edinburgh EH12 9DQ  
Tel: 0131 317 1130  
Web: [www.scottishdisabilitysport.com](http://www.scottishdisabilitysport.com)

Leading the development of sport in Scotland for people of all ages and abilities with a physical, sensory or learning disability. Has links to disability sailing in Scotland

### Disability Sport Wales

Sport Wales National Centre  
Sophia Gardens  
Cardiff CF11 9SW  
Tel: 0845 846 0021  
Web: [www.fdsww.org.uk](http://www.fdsww.org.uk)

Develops sporting and physical activity opportunities for disabled children and people. They have details of disability sport coaches throughout Wales and a Community database where you can find your nearest club by sport and disability.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

"A good inclusive experience for any child, with any disability, largely depends on the attitude of the providers. No amount of training can take the place of the willingness to include all disabilities."

**'Everybody Here? Play and Leisure for Disabled Children and Young People.'** <sup>2</sup>

### **Disability Sport Northern Ireland**

Adelaide House, Falcon Rd  
Belfast BT12 6SJ  
Tel: 028 9038 7062  
Web: [www.dsni.co.uk](http://www.dsni.co.uk)

For people with disabilities to take part in sport and physical recreation at all levels. It currently runs a range of events, participation programmes, training courses and services, all designed to give local disabled children and adults the opportunity to lead a full and active lifestyle through sport and physical recreation.

### **English Federation of Disability Sport**

SportPark, Loughborough University  
3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough  
Leicestershire LE11 3QF  
Tel: 01509 227750  
Web: [www.efds.net](http://www.efds.net)

Represents the sporting and physical activity interests of disabled people and organisations in England. Provides inclusion training for sports coaches. Information on finding the right sport for you, clubs, and examples of good practice.

### **Special Olympics Great Britain**

Corinthian House, 1st Floor,  
6-8 Great Eastern Street  
London EC2A 3NT  
Tel: 0207 247 8891  
Web: [www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk](http://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk)

Provides sporting opportunities for children with a learning disability from the age of five, and adults. If your child is interested in becoming an athlete, they provide training programmes, regardless of ability or degree of learning disability.

### **Freedom in the Air**

32a Curwen Road, Shepherds Bush,  
London, W12 9AE  
Tel: 020 8740 8806  
Web: [www.freedomintheair.org](http://www.freedomintheair.org)

Charity giving disabled youngsters the opportunity to fly, either in a light aircraft, or to pilot an aircraft. They organise regular flying days for young people with full supervision of aviation safety practices, based at Cranfield Airport. Family members are welcome.

### **Aerobility**

Blackbushe Airport, Camberley  
GU17 9LQ  
Tel: 0303 303 1230  
Web: [www.bdfa.net](http://www.bdfa.net)

Aerobility is run largely by disabled aviators, for disabled people. They give

young disabled people fun introductory sessions and the chance to fly, and have airfields in Wales, Scotland and England. Aeobility are regulated and approved by the Civil Aviation Authority to provide flight training.

## Days out

Many major attractions, organisations and schemes in the UK provide opportunities for days out. Many of them operate schemes where either a parent or other carer or disabled person gets in free. It's worth giving them a call as they can advise you about any accessibility issues you may want to be sure about before the day, and documents you might need to bring to take advantage of any offers.

### The National Trust

PO Box 39, Warrington WA5 7WD  
Tel: 0844 800 1895  
Web: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

Preserves and protects more than 300 historic places and gardens to visit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Most properties have a good degree of access and their admission policy has

**"Always check the disability policy of venues you go to - lots of attractions let carers in for free."**

**Jane**



an 'Admit One' card in the name of the disabled visitor, so a carer can go free of charge. Wherever possible, their historic buildings allow power wheelchairs and assistance dogs. Free on the website, the 'Access for All' guide provides information about the accessibility of their properties. You can also book holidays and camping in their properties, which they are currently developing access guides for. Search for 'visitors with disabilities' on their website.

### Visit Woods

The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way  
Grantham NG31 6LL  
Tel: 01476 581135  
Web: [visitwoods.org.uk](http://visitwoods.org.uk)

Visit Woods is a project by the Woodland Trust to make woodlands more accessible. Not knowing what to

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expect when you get to a wood may be particularly difficult for people with disabilities where stiles, gates, toilets and other facilities might be unsuitable for wheelchair or scooter users. Their guides give you information about accessibility so you can plan your visit.

### **Culture 24**

Office 4, 28 Kensington Street  
Brighton BN1 4AJ  
Tel: 01273 623 266  
Web: [www.culture24.org.uk](http://www.culture24.org.uk)

Online publisher giving information on more than 4,000 museums, galleries and heritage sites.

Culture 24 also have a children's website with details of family-friendly museums and family days out. Venues should have accessibility information on their websites or you can call them in advance.  
Web: [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk)

### **Safari and wildlife parks**

Web: [www.safaripark.co.uk](http://www.safaripark.co.uk)

Web resource for safari and wildlife parks with contact details, opening times and admission information. Clickable links take you to each park's information where you'll find details on accessibility.

### **Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card**

The Card Network, Network House  
St Ives Way, Sandycroft CH5 2QS  
Tel: 0845 123 1292  
Web: [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

National card that can be used to verify that the holder is entitled to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To apply for the card, you will need to meet one or more of the following criteria: be in receipt of DLA or Attendance Allowance, or be a registered blind person. The card is valid for one year from the date of issue and currently costs £5.50.



## Riding for the Disabled Association

Norfolk House, 1A, Tournament Court  
Edgehill Drive, Warwick CV34 6LG  
Tel: 0845 658 1082  
Web: [www.rda.org.uk](http://www.rda.org.uk)

Provides the opportunity for disabled children and people of any age, suitable for physical and learning difficulties, to ride, vault, or carriage-drive. They have over 500 groups across the UK and you can search for your nearest centre on the website. They are also researching the benefits of therapy with horses.

### *The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain*

Tel: 0800 953 7070

Web: [www.accessibleguide.co.uk](http://www.accessibleguide.co.uk)

### *The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain Family Days Out*

Web: [www.accessibleguide.co.uk/familydaysout](http://www.accessibleguide.co.uk/familydaysout)

These guides are produced in association with Motability and have over 200 ideas for great days out across the UK. They include accessibility information, including disabled parking and reviews, hints and tips written by disabled visitors. They're both available to search free online and *Rough guide to accessible Britain* is free to Blue Badge holders.

The online guide to family days out has family-friendly attractions, all visited and reviewed by disabled people and their families. That means children of all ages have road tested them.



## Holidays

Everyone needs a change of scene from time to time. You may find some of the organisations listed on page 16 useful for ideas and information on the different holidays to choose from. There are many organisations which provide holidays and holiday accommodation for families and disabled children.

## Help to pay for holidays

Families with disabled children may be entitled to help from the local social services department. Some authorities may provide grants towards holiday costs, others may offer holidays at places of their own choice. Some local authorities insist on means testing and, even when grants are available, they are usually small. Many charitable organisations will help towards holiday costs. Some are listed on page 16.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Other financial help

Contact a Family can advise on all aspects of the benefits and tax credits system to make sure you are claiming all you are entitled to. Our advisers can also look for charitable grants you may be able to apply for to go on holiday and other financial help which may be available. Call the Contact a Family freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555.

## A guide to grants for individuals in need

Web: [www.dsc.org.uk](http://www.dsc.org.uk)

Details of a wide range of funds and other support available for families with disabled children, including grants to pay for holidays and leisure activities.

Your local library or Citizens Advice Bureau may have a copy of this. Or call the Contact a Family freephone helpline for a list of charitable trusts and help searching for charities you can approach.

## Family Fund

Unit 4, Alpha Court, Monk Cross Drive  
York YO32 9WN



Tel: 08449 744 099

Web: [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

May be able to help towards holiday costs for a family when there is a disabled or seriously-ill child from birth to 17 years old. Grants are a contribution towards family holidays with or without the child. You can apply to the Fund if:

- you live in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales
- you have evidence of your entitlement to one the following: Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Employment Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Pension Credit. If you do not receive any of the above, further information may be needed to complete your application
- you have permanent legal residency in the UK and have lived in the UK for six months.

The Family Fund is able to provide holiday grants in a number of different ways, including:

- Thomas Cook option – vouchers can be given towards a holiday booked via the Thomas Cook travel agency – this can be towards flights, ferries, train and coach travel and numerous holidays in the UK or abroad
- Butlins holiday – families can now choose a holiday direct through Butlins
- Haven Holiday – families may choose a holiday in one of the 35 holiday parks around which have a range of entertainment on offer



- outings and recreation – a cash grant may be given for days out for families who may not be able to take a holiday due to their child’s disability or health condition
- non contract holiday – if the holiday a family is planning falls outside of the Haven, Butlins and Thomas Cook options, then the family will need to provide details of their individual plans and the Fund will then look at whether a contribution can be made towards this. These are usually only considered in exceptional circumstances
- the Fund can offer a transport grant to assist with a family’s holiday to see a relative or visit friends inside the UK where they may be driving a long distance. This would only be done when the transport cannot be provided by Thomas Cook.

The Fund may be able to help with other grants to help children and young people access play and leisure activities. Here are some requests that the Fund has been able to help with in the past:

- trampoline
- playstations and games
- TV and DVD players
- greenhouse
- sensory toys and equipment
- karate uniforms
- singing lessons.

## Finding a holiday and travel insurance

### Tourism for all UK

C/o Vitalise, Shap Road Industrial Estate  
Shap Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 6NZ  
Tel: 0303 303 0146

Web: [www.tourismforall.org.uk](http://www.tourismforall.org.uk)

Tourism for All UK (TFA) is a charity website that has been developed as a one stop shop to provide information on accessible accommodation, holidays, attractions, days out, plus planning your

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

"Holidays are great now. With Direct Payments we take a support worker along; my son has a wonderful time and mum gets a break as well!"

**Jane**

trip in the UK and overseas. Click on the TFA Directory for a list of services, such as holiday charities, attractions and accommodation, care services, short breaks, oxygen suppliers and more. They also list travel insurance companies for people with disabilities. They host 'Open Britain' a web-based guide of accessible places to stay in UK at [www.openbritain.net/openbritain](http://www.openbritain.net/openbritain)

### **National Autistic Society**

393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG  
Autism freephone helpline:  
0808 800 4104  
Web: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Provides information on autism-friendly holidays and days out on their website, including planning your break. Search for 'holidays and days out' on their website.

### **3H Fund**

B2 Speldhurst Business Park, Langton Road, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells TN3 0AQ  
Tel: 01892 860207  
Web: [www.3hfund.org](http://www.3hfund.org)

Provide subsidised group holidays for physically disabled children and adults and respite for their carers. When funds are available, they can give grants to families on low incomes.

### **Speyside Trust Badaguish Centre – Scotland**

Aviemore, Inverness-shire PH22 1QU  
Tel: 01479 861 285  
Web: [www.badaguish.org](http://www.badaguish.org)

Short breaks activity holidays for children and adults with learning and multiple disabilities (24-hour respite care) with a wide choice of outdoor activities, such as canoeing, walking, biking and archery, to suit all levels of ability. Children can enjoy and discover new skills and abilities with safety and confidence in the care of a qualified team and the personal supervision of the Care Manager.

### **National Holiday Fund for Sick and Disabled Children**

PO Box 318, Great Yarmouth NR29 4WT  
Tel: 01493 731 235  
Web: [www.nhfcharity.co.uk](http://www.nhfcharity.co.uk)

Provides holidays to Florida for severely ill or disabled children aged eight to 18 years whose need for medical care prevents them going far from home. The child will be allocated a holiday with a small group of children – all with compatible needs. Doctors, nurses, paramedics and carers will be appointed to each group depending on need.

### **Scout Holiday Homes Trust**

Gilwell Park, Chingford, London E4 7QW  
Tel: 0845 300 1818 (local rate) or

**“Let us and our children choose what is right for us! Don’t make assumptions or put us into boxes. Provide a range of experiences to meet a range of abilities.”**

***‘Hello! Are you Listening’<sup>1</sup>***

0208 433 7100

Web: [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk)

Provide inexpensive, self-catering holidays at a variety of holiday camps around the UK for any families with a disabled member. You do not have to be a scout or guide to benefit. Search for ‘Holiday homes’ on their website.

### **Holidays for all**

Tel: 0303 303 0146

Web: [www.holidaysforall.org](http://www.holidaysforall.org)

A consortium of holiday providers offering leisure activities and accommodation throughout the UK and abroad for people with sensory and physical impairments, their friends and families.

### **Ski 2 Freedom Foundation**

Tel: 0844 8552302

Web: [www.ski2freedom.com](http://www.ski2freedom.com)

Encourages and promotes snow-sport and mountain activities for disabled

children and adults. You’ll find everything you need to know, including disabled ski equipment and clothing, to help you to plan the best experience in the mountains and winter sports information about activities and locations worldwide.

## **Wish-granting charities**

These charities offer special treats or holidays for children who are very ill or are living with severe disabilities. They cover the whole of the UK but have different eligibility criteria so you will need to check with them directly for further information.



Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

### **Make a Wish Foundation UK**

329-331 London Road, Camberley

GU15 3HQ

Tel: 01276 40 50 60

Web: [www.make-a-wish.org.uk](http://www.make-a-wish.org.uk)

Grants 'once-in-a-lifetime' wishes of children aged 3 to 17 fighting life-threatening conditions. Parents, professionals or the child themselves can request a wish.

### **Starlight Children's Foundation**

Macmillan House, Paddington Station

London W2 1HD

Tel: 020 7262 2881

Web: [www.starlight.org.uk](http://www.starlight.org.uk)

Grants the wishes of seriously and terminally ill children aged 4 to 18. They also put on parties, pantomimes, fun centres, distraction boxes and entertainment for children in hospitals and hospices throughout the UK. Anyone can refer a child for wish.

### **Dreams Come True Charity**

Exchange House, 33 Station Road

Liphook, Hampshire, GU30 7DW

Freephone: 0800 018 6013

Web: [www.dctc.org.uk](http://www.dctc.org.uk)



Fulfills 'dreams' for children and young adults, 2 to 21 years of age who are living with a life threatening, or long-term illness. Anyone can nominate a child for a 'dream'.

### **Happy Days Children's Charity**

Clody House, 90-100 Collingdon Street

Luton LU1 1RX

Tel: 01582 755 999

Web: [www.happydayscharity.org](http://www.happydayscharity.org)

Fund and organise holidays, residential trips, days out and theatre trips throughout the UK for disadvantaged young people with severe mental and physical disabilities and life-limiting illnesses aged 3 to 17 years. Parents can apply on the website or call for an application form.

### **When You Wish Upon a Star**

Futurist House, Valley Road, Basford

Nottingham NG5 1JE

Tel: 0115 979 1720

Web: [www.whenyouwishuponastar.org.uk](http://www.whenyouwishuponastar.org.uk)

Aims to fulfill wishes for any child (aged 2 to 16 years) who has a life-threatening or terminal illness. Parents or medical professionals can apply for a child.

## **Equipment and mobility**

For help in choosing the right equipment or for information about getting around, see the following organisations:

### **British Red Cross**

44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL

Tel: 0844 871 1111

Web: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)



Has a network of centres which can lend aids and equipment, including wheelchairs. Details of the nearest centre are available from your local branch of the British Red Cross (see telephone directory or search their website for 'social support in the UK').

### **Disabled Living Foundation**

380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU  
Freephone helpline: 0845 130 9177  
Web: [www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children](http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children)

Information on all types of disability equipment including advice on choosing children's mobility equipment, transport, toys, games and daily living equipment. Also lists links to suppliers a range of daily living equipment, disability aids or mobility products. They also have a list of charitable funding for children's equipment.

### **Disability Rights UK**

12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF  
Web: [www.radar.org.uk](http://www.radar.org.uk)

(The Disability Alliance, Radar, the National Centre for Independent Living and SKILL have merged to become Disability Rights UK)

Has a National Key Scheme (NKS) offering independent access to 9,000 locked public toilets around the UK plus an accompanying NKS guide. The NKS scheme is also available as an iPhone app. They also produce a Blue Badge Atlas with all the access information you need for a trip in town or across the UK.

### **DirectGov**

Web: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/MotoringAndTransport/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/MotoringAndTransport/index.htm)

Contains lots of helpful information on using public transport, vehicle tax exemptions, car adaptations, the Motability Scheme and the Blue Badge Scheme.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## **Making play and leisure work for disabled children**

### **Campaigning for better leisure services**

There is more awareness than ever among government departments, local authorities and play providers about including disabled children. Lots of organisations are lobbying for more resources for play and leisure services and to ensure that local plans for play facilities include disabled children.

Individual parents may have an opportunity to sit on local planning groups, or you can contact your local parent carer forum and press for better services. For example in Hull, the parent carer forum helped the local authority improve play facilities for disabled children in the local park. For more information about how you can help shape local services, and to find your local parent carer forum see the Parent Participation section on our website [www.cafamily.org.uk/professionals/parentparticipation](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/professionals/parentparticipation)



Or local parents' groups can ask to meet with professionals and press for change.

You may wish to contact some of the following campaigning organisations:

### **Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM)**

c/o Council for Disabled Children  
National Children's Bureau  
8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE  
Tel: 020 7843 6448  
Web: [www.edcm.org.uk](http://www.edcm.org.uk)

EDCM is a campaigning organisation to get rights and justice for every disabled child and their family in England.

### **Disabled Children Matter Wales (DCMW)**

c/o Contact a Family Wales  
33–35 Cathedral Rd, Cardiff, CF11 9HB  
Tel: 029 2039 6629  
Tel: 029 2039 6624  
Web: [www.dcmw.org.uk](http://www.dcmw.org.uk)

The DCMW campaign is all about disabled children and young people coming together with their families and friends to make sure that the Welsh Assembly Government makes disabled children and young people a priority over the next three years.

### **For Scotlands Disabled Children (fSDC)**

c/o Contact a Family  
SPACE, 11 Harewood Road,  
Edinburgh EH16 4NT  
Tel: 0131 659 2939  
Web: [www.fsd.org.uk](http://www.fsd.org.uk)

Established in 2007 to secure rights and justice for disabled children in Scotland.

## Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance (CDSA)

c/o Children in Northern Ireland  
Unit 9, 40 Montgomery Road  
Belfast BT6 9HL  
Tel: 028 9040 1290  
Web: [www.ci-ni.org.uk](http://www.ci-ni.org.uk)

The CDSA brings together organizations from the children's sector and the disability sector. CDSA wants to ensure that policy impacting on the lives of children with disabilities is informed by their needs and circumstances.

## Resources for professionals

### KIDS

KIDS works across England providing short breaks, and good practice briefings on short breaks and inclusive play and leisure for disabled children. You can find these and much more on their website.

They offer training, guidance and support for professionals and have gathered all the legislation, policy and guidance in one place. They have published a literature review, a design manifesto with recommendations to encourage disabled children to enjoy outdoor play spaces, guidance on creating accessible play spaces, plus lots of useful publications and resources on inclusive play in their professionals area.

All KIDS information is available to download free from [www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)

## Children's Play Information Service (CPIS)

National Children's Bureau  
8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE  
Tel: 0207 843 6303  
Web: [www.ncb.org.uk/cpis](http://www.ncb.org.uk/cpis)

(CPIS) is a national information service on all children's play. Their reference library covers most aspects of children's play, including theory, research, policy and practice. Visitors are welcome by appointment. They also provide a free enquiry service to anyone with a professional or academic interest in children's play.

### Play England

Web: [www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)

### Play Wales

Web: [www.playwales.org.uk](http://www.playwales.org.uk)

### Play Scotland

Web: [www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)

### Playboard – Northern Ireland

Web: [www.playboard.org](http://www.playboard.org)

These organisations provide information and guidance on play provision for all children, plus policy and training for play workers in the nations. They have projects and information for disabled children.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## What disabled young people say about leisure

The Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) campaign 'If I could change one thing' asked disabled children and young people: 'If you could change one thing for disabled children, young people, and their families, what would it be?' Their 'Disabled children's manifesto for change' also highlights what the children and young people want:

Top things disabled children and young people wanted to change are:

- to have more fun things to do
- to change negative attitudes to disability – disabled children and young people are more likely to be bullied at school and in their communities
- to make it everyone's right to get a good education. They want to feel welcomed by schools, included in all aspects of school life and supported to learn and make friendships
- to do things on their own – like all children and young people. A lack of proper support means they often have to rely on their parents or other adults.

The top things they said would allow them to get involved in activities are:

- better attitudes to disabled young people from staff and other young people

- play and youth activities that are welcoming and easier to access
- accessible and affordable transport.

See what else they said at [www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx](http://www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx) (scroll down)

EDCM's response, 'Going Places – Ensuring the play and youth strategies deliver for disabled children and young people,' asked children and young people, 'What would more fun things to do and places to go look like for you?'

Find out what they said at [www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx](http://www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx) (scroll down)

Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation<sup>1</sup> found that leisure was very important to disabled young people, particularly when they had more time for leisure because of limited opportunities in education and employment.

### Young people said:

- their education experiences had a major impact on their opportunities for friendships and leisure activities outside school
- they valued the opportunity to be involved in mainstream activities, but also wanted to meet other young disabled people to share experiences
- their lives were blighted by loneliness, isolation and exclusion.

The research also found that:

- professionals saw inclusive leisure as a way for disabled young people to learn life skills, increase independence and/or increase self-esteem. Young people saw inclusive leisure as a way to have fun and meet friends
- lack of appropriate support (like transport, personal assistance and support to facilitate and/or interpret communication) was a key barrier for young disabled people wanting to access inclusive leisure
- disabled young people were often excluded but, beyond this, their interests and concerns were no different to those of their non disabled peers.

### **What parents of disabled young people say about leisure**

Contact a Family conducted a survey, *Everybody Here?*<sup>2</sup> which found that parents felt bowling alleys had the most inclusive facilities, with playgrounds and parks being the least inclusive. The survey also contains a list of attractions across the UK that families with disabled children enjoyed visiting, as well as examples of good

practice. Parents also had the following suggestions for leisure providers:

- publish information about local accessible facilities and activities
- allocate some specific sessions to cater for disabled children
- portray positive images of disabled children in your publicity
- use bright colours, textures and sounds to help children with sensory impairments
- buy items to increase the range of activities for disabled children, for example wheelchair-friendly roundabouts
- put a changing table in accessible toilets, suitable for older children who wear nappies or pads
- provide large unisex cubicles in swimming pools to also accommodate a carer
- install wheelchair accessible gates instead of stiles and kissing gates on marked country walks
- fund volunteer 'buddy schemes' to help young people use and get the most out of leisure facilities
- provide leisure passes which give concessions to disabled children and accompanying carers.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## References

1 *Hello! Are you Listening* by Pippa Murray, published by Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002. ISBN 1 84263 074 1

2 *Everybody Here? Play and Leisure for Disabled Children and Young People*, Contact a Family, 2002

3 *Come on In! Developing Inclusive Play and Leisure Services* Action for Children and Contact a Family West Midlands, 2003

"We need to have access to different out of school activities for the children (art, dancing, clubs, gymnastics, trampolining, music) where the staff understand the child's difficulty and give them a chance to explore and develop their potential."

***'Come on In! Developing Inclusive Play and Leisure Services.'***<sup>3</sup>



Written and compiled by Philomena Murphy, Clare Kassa and Karin Beeler

### **Social networking**

Contact a Family is on Facebook and Twitter. Join us at:

#### **Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/contactafamily](http://www.facebook.com/contactafamily)

#### **Twitter**

[www.twitter.com/contactafamily](http://www.twitter.com/contactafamily)

### **Podcasts**

You can download podcasts from our website at:  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/news/podcasts.html](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/news/podcasts.html)

iTunes users can listen to our podcasts at:  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/itunes](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/itunes)

### **Videos**

You can watch videos on our YouTube channel at:  
[www.youtube.com/cafamily](http://www.youtube.com/cafamily)

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**  
Web: **[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Getting in contact with us

Free helpline for parents and families

**0808 808 3555**

Open Mon–Fri, 9.30am–5pm

Access to over 170 languages

**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

**[www.makingcontact.org](http://www.makingcontact.org)**

Contact a Family Head Office:

**209–211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN**

Tel **020 7608 8700**

Fax **020 7608 8701**

Email **[info@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:info@cafamily.org.uk)**

Web **[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**



Language Line  
services

## Other information booklets available

This guide is one of a series produced for parents and groups concerned with the care of disabled children. A full list of Contact a Family publications is available on request or can be downloaded from our website [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

- Fathers (UK)
- Understanding your child's behaviour (UK)
- Grandparents (UK)
- Siblings (UK)
- Special educational needs (UK)
- The tax credits guide (UK)
- Working (UK)
- The NHS and caring for a disabled child (England)
- Disabled children's services in England and Wales (England & Wales)

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