

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

incorporating  
**The Lady Hoare Trust**

in **contact**



**The newsletter of Contact a Family North West**  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/northwest](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/northwest)

## Winter Bulletin, 2011

Contact a Family would like to thank the following for their generous support of our work in the North West Region: Kathleen and Ivy Barnett, Children in Need, The Big Lottery Fund and the Scottish Power Energy Trust.

Registered in England and Wales: Number 1633333

We are the only UK-wide charity providing advice, information and support to the parents of all disabled children.



**The Scottish Power  
Energy People Trust**  
Supporting Communities

## Parents, We Need You...! To fill in our new registration form...

Whether you are new to Contact a Family or have been with us for some time, we need you to fill in the **NEW** registration form. Our database of contacts needs updating and legally we cannot hold on to personal information that we haven't been able to check for some time.

If we have your details we can send you our newsletters, information about free family events and news about all kinds of issues that may affect your family. We need your help to update your details on this new form.



We have enclosed a pre-paid envelope for you to put the form into. We hope that this new form is quick and easy to fill out, but if you need any help or advice to fill it in, or you would prefer to do it electronically, please let us know by contacting Corriena on **01772 812 294** or Cath on **0161 445 3749**. If you would like more registration forms please let us know. Thank you.

**Fill it in and send it back to us NOW if you would like to continue to receive the quarterly newsletter and information about events!**

## Contact a Family North West

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

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

**National Freephone Helpline 0808 808 3555** Monday – Friday (9.30 - 5.00)  
The Language Line interpretation service is available for those whose first language is not English.

## North West Team at Contact a Family

**Corriena Tomkinson** - Regional Development Worker (North West)

[corriena.tomkinson@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:corriena.tomkinson@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 01772 812 294

Corriena helps to co-ordinate family events and workshops across the North West region. Corriena works closely with Cath Tyrie, another NW Development Worker, providing information and identifying areas for development work.

**Catherine Tyrie** - Regional Development Worker (North West) (with fuel poverty work)

[catherine.tyrie@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:catherine.tyrie@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 0161 445 3749

Cath helps to co-ordinate family events and workshops across the North West region. Cath works closely with Corriena Tomkinson, another NW Development Worker, providing information and identifying areas for development work. She also heads up the fuel poverty work in this region.

**Carolyn Deveney** – Parent Carer Participation Advisor (North West)

[carolyn.deveney@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:carolyn.deveney@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 07905 917 066

Carolyn will be supporting parent carer forums across the region.

**Debbie Armstrong** - Family Worker (Cumbria)

[debbie.armstrong@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:debbie.armstrong@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 01228 550 069 or 0750 728 062

Debbie delivers workshops and family support across Cumbria.

**Karen Robinson** – Senior Children's Centre Advisor (North West and East Midlands)

[karen.robinson@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:karen.robinson@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 01706 220 578

Karen works with Children's Centres across the region, providing advice, information and training for centre staff and partnership agencies. She delivers themed workshops; advice and information sessions for families with disabled children within Children's Centres and 'taster' events; supports parental involvement and participation in children's centres to improve the services they offer families and can offer support with development of support groups within these settings.

## Volunteer Parent Representatives

**Ruth Card** (St. Helens area)

[ruth.card@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:ruth.card@cafamily.org.uk) Telephone 01942 721 323

Ruth is the Area Volunteer Parent Rep, she is the parent of a disabled child and offers peer support and local signposting for parents in the St. Helen's area.

## Contact a Family News

### Samantha Cameron launches new fundraising appeal for Contact a Family...

We would like to take the opportunity to share with you the fantastic day we had when Samantha Cameron visited our Lewisham office's pamper day on 12th October. She came to help launch our new fundraising campaign 'Stronger families; Happier lives.' Importantly, she was also able to meet some of the parents during the day and share with them her experiences of raising a disabled child. She also took the time to paint the nails of Nalan Salih, who is a mother of a 5 year old boy with Cerebral Palsy (below).

Samantha Cameron told reporters "I speak from experience when highlighting how essential it is for any parent with a disabled child to have a break from daily care and to share their experiences with other parents in the same situation. It makes all the difference to have a support network and to exchange advice and concerns. It was lovely to meet the parents today and to hear how Contact a Family has been making such a difference to their lives".

Samantha and David Cameron's son Ivan who had cerebral palsy and epilepsy, tragically passed away in 2009.

This kind of high profile media coverage should go some way to help raise the profile of the charity and our new fundraising campaign – 'Stronger families; Happier Lives,' to members of the public - who are all potential supporters and fundraisers. The aim of this campaign is to raise money to enable our continued work as well as raise awareness of the issues facing families of the 770,000 disabled children in the UK today.

The money raised from the campaign, will go towards broadening and strengthening our current services to ensure that we can support the increasing number of families with disabled children who are coming to us for help during these tough times. For further information about the campaign, please refer to [www.cafamily.org.uk/getinvolved/ourappeal](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/getinvolved/ourappeal).



## Contact a Family News

### Contact a Family gets the green light on parent carer participation...



Contact a Family and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) are pleased to announce that Contact a Family has been successful in being awarded the contract to support parent carer participation over the next two years. The National Network of Parent Carer Forums will be key partners in decision making around the programme, and we look forward to continuing to work together.

Srabani Sen, Chief Executive of Contact a Family, said: "Strengthening parent participation is at the heart of Contact a Family's work and we look forward to supporting parent carer forums to continue their excellent work." Anna Gill and Carrie Britton, co-chairs of the NNPCF, said: "We are delighted that the Government

values the unique and crucial perspective that parent carers can bring to strategic decision making at all levels, from national commissioning and policy making through to the local allocation of scarce resources; the ongoing commitment to support the development of all Parent Carer Forums through Contact a Family will help us ensure that the voice of even more families will be heard."

Contact a Family and the NNPCF are pleased that this has now been confirmed, and we can move on to the next stages of strengthening parent participation. For more information visit our parent participation section on our website at [www.cafamily.org.uk/northwest](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/northwest)

### SEN National Advice Service...

Contact a Family is delighted to confirm that we have been awarded the Department for Education contract to include a Special Educational Needs advisory service within our existing range of services for families.

The new SEN National Advice Service will be part of our integrated Helpline/Online service, and will be staffed by experienced SEN advisers. It will be a one stop shop for parents and other family members caring for a child with SEN, on all education issues. The telephone helpline will enable parents and carers to get one-to-one, in-depth and personalised advice from fully-trained SEN advisers.

Our online service will offer more general advice and guidance, via email, our website, facebook and twitter to enable families to engage with us and with each other. Our SEN service will cover a broad range of issues

related to special educational needs in any education setting, including:

- Early years/portage
- School Action and Action Plus
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Statutory Assessments
- Statements
- Transition Planning
- 139A assessment and post-16 provision
- Home education
- Bullying
- Exclusions

To contact the helpline service Tel: 0808 808 3555 [helpline@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cafamily.org.uk) The helpline is open Monday-Friday, 9.30am-5pm.

## Contact a Family News

### Shaping health services to meet families' needs...

We have secured three years funding from the Department of Health to ensure parent carers have their say in shaping the health services their children access. This is a vital piece of work at a time when the NHS is undergoing major structural change. We are very keen to hear from condition support groups about

examples of good services developed for specific conditions which we could usefully share with others. If you have information to share or would like to hear more contact Sheila Davies on **020 7608 8773** or email [Sheila.davies@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:Sheila.davies@cafamily.org.uk)



### Family Life – helping to strengthen families and relationships...

*Family Life* is a Contact a Family project aiming to strengthen the relationships of families with disabled children. Working with children's centre staff and parent support groups we are encouraging families to seek relationship support and giving professionals the right tools to offer support. There is a dedicated relationships enquiry service, training, workshops and new resources. If you need to talk to someone about an issue that's affecting

you, or your family, or if you're looking for some information and advice on parenting and family life; we can help. We've teamed up with RELATE to offer you free online access to their consultants.



Find out more about this project for families or for professionals on our website or contact Louise Derbyshire on 020 7608 8715 or email [louise.derbyshire@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:louise.derbyshire@cafamily.org.uk).

### Helping children's centres deliver for parent and carers...

Building on the success of our previous children centre project, where a number of children's centres improved their knowledge and development of services, Contact a Family have been successful in receiving funding by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund for three years to help increase the services and support offered to families of disabled children at Children's Centres across England.

The aim is to improve access to children's centres for families with disabled children by working in partnership with children's centres and supporting parents to get involved to help shape children centre services that meet their needs.

What we offer children's centres:

- family drop-in sessions and workshops
- advice, training, guidance for centre staff
- supporting parent participation in children's centres
- access to a wide range of resources and information

Families of disabled children still struggle for the right information and support. This problem compounds and increases all the other issues that families have to face such as accessing financial support, lack of leisure activities, stress, isolation, stigma and social exclusion and other hardships.

The 'Strengthening Children's Centres for Parent/Carers' project aims to overcome some of these issues and build a basis for more effective community involvement and support. The project covers: North West and East Midlands; the South East and South West; and twenty six London boroughs.

If you are a parent or professional and want to find out more or would like to share your views or any issues on children's centre provision in your area please contact Karen Robinson, on 01706 220578; Mobile: 07763 161115; Email: [karen.robinson@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:karen.robinson@cafamily.org.uk)



### Anybody out there... Making Contact?

One of the things parents often say is that they want to talk to another parent who has a child with the same condition. We can help make this happen by offering an on-line linking service called MakingContact.org. You can access it from our main website [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk) or directly by typing MakingContact.org in your search engine.

We have been providing this service since 2004 and there are over 9,000 people registered. Previously there was a small charge to use some of the features, but on 1 October 2011 the service became totally **free** to use. Any parent who created a profile on the MakingContact.org site before 1 October 2011 will now have full access and can email other users at no cost. Take a look around the site at

the information and stories that other parents have shared. If you are new to the site and want to contact someone else you will need to complete the registration form and provide a brief bit of information about yourself. If you wish you can provide more details in the full story section.



The service is confidential and none of your personal information will be viewed (for example, your email or real name). You can search for people who have children with the same condition or who live in the same area. Why not take a look today and make contact! If you have any questions or need help using this site email [info@makingcontact.org](mailto:info@makingcontact.org)

### Warm Home Discount Scheme: £120 in your pocket?

Social tariffs are energy rates which suppliers offer at discounted rates to low income and vulnerable groups. The amount of discount and eligibility criteria is completely up to the energy supplier and varies between suppliers. This year the government has intervened to try to give more protection to these groups, under a new scheme called the Warm Home Discount.

Under this scheme, social tariffs will gradually be phased out and instead two separate groups will be offered a credit of £120 each year, for the next four years, to help with winter electricity costs. There will be a transition period between the social tariffs and movement onto this new scheme with some help for people who are no longer eligible.

All of the big six energy suppliers (and some of the smaller ones), are part of this scheme including British Gas, Eon, npower, Scottish Power, Scottish and Southern Energy, and EDF. The scheme makes it compulsory for these energy companies to offer the rebate to a core group of pensioners, (those who get guarantee credit). The definition of the second, broader group of customers, have been left to

the energy companies to define but is supposed to include 'fuel poor' consumers, or those in a group at risk of fuel poverty. The criteria varies between each supplier but they basically cover households which have a low income and those with a disability, long term illness, child under 5 or, a child with a disability.

You will qualify for the rebate automatically if you are in the core group of pensioners. The second group of customers will have to apply for this credit and alarmingly, five out of the six energy companies recently admitted that they had a limited amount of money for this scheme and therefore, even if you are eligible, you may not get the rebate if you don't apply quickly. British Gas is the only supplier not limiting the amount of claimants and have guaranteed that all of those eligible, who claim before January 2012, will receive the rebate. There is government pressure for the rest to follow.

If you think you may be eligible, check with your supplier **NOW** and ask for their eligibility criteria for this scheme and you could be £120 better off this winter so there's no time to waste!



### Is your child eligible for a new government bursary payment?



Contact a Family is urging parents with a disabled child planning to stay on in further education, to call the Helpline to get advice about whether they qualify for the government's new bursary for 16–19 year olds.

Parents might be unaware that the new bursary is available from September 2011 for 16 to 19 year olds in further education. This is being

introduced as a replacement for the Educational Maintenance Allowance. The most vulnerable students will be guaranteed a payment of £1,200 per year - and this includes some young disabled students. For further details about if your son or daughter could be eligible for a payment of £1,200, call Contact a Family's Freephone Helpline on **0808 808 3555**.

### Sign Up! Campaign...

The National Deaf Children's Society has launched the **Sign Up!** campaign to persuade the Government to roll out family sign language classes across England.

'It's unfair that parents who need to sign with their deaf child are not getting the support they need' say the NDCS and they are asking for your help to change this! You can do this by

writing to your MP or signing the petition – check out the NDCS website at [www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)



For further information, contact the National Deaf Children's Society, 15 Dufferin Street, London EC1Y 8UR. Tel 020 7014 1119, Tel 020 7490 8656 [Anna.Kasmir@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:Anna.Kasmir@ndcs.org.uk)

### Employment support for young people with disabilities...

The Department for Work and Pensions has recently launched an independent review, by RADAR called '*Getting in, staying in and getting on, Disability employment support fit for the future*'. It includes a range of recommendations

for supporting disabled people, including young disabled people, into work. More information and the reports contents can be found at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/specialist-disability-employment/>

### Flu jabs for carers this winter...

As a carer you may be worried about getting the flu because it would affect your ability to care for the person you're looking after. You may be able to get a flu jab because of this, or because of your age or your own health. Government policy states that the flu vaccine should be offered to the following groups:

1. Everyone aged 65 years and over.
2. Everyone aged six months or over who is in a clinical risk group.
3. People living in long-stay residential care homes or other long-stay care facilities where the infection could spread (this doesn't include university halls of residence).

4. People who are receiving **Carer's Allowance**, or who are the **main carer** for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.



People who fall into this last category should explain their concerns for the welfare of the person they're looking after, if they should fall ill, e.g. if there is no one else who would be able to step in. If you have health problems of your own, ask your GP if you fall into one of the clinical risk groups. Your GP will decide whether you need a flu jab based on this information

### Follow these fifteen easy steps to get savvy and get saving...



#### 1. Get switched on...

Do you know how much your gas and electricity costs, what rate, tariff or discount you're on and when it ends? Energy suppliers have been criticised for keeping prices high for millions of existing customers, while offering cut-price deals to attract new ones. Get out those last few bills and get switched on!

#### 2. Check-out tariffs and discounts on offer...

Energy companies offer a range of tariffs and discounts. Green tariffs are rates linked to renewable energy sources like wind or solar power but tend not to offer great reductions. Social tariffs are discounted rates offered to vulnerable groups like low income families and pensioners. These tariffs are currently being phased out with the Warm Home Discount Scheme (please read above). There are a range of other reduced tariffs, including, dual fuel, online, fixed price, capped rate and multi-rate electricity tariffs. The tariffs and discounts vary between suppliers and are subject to change throughout the year, so it's worth checking which one you're on and if there's a better deal you can switch to.

#### 3. Consider switching suppliers...

Check out the energy sites accredited by [www.consumerfocus.org.uk](http://www.consumerfocus.org.uk) and shop around. You could save hundreds of pounds by switching. Watch out for schemes which lock you in for long periods of time, those which require you to pay a penalty to withdraw from, and make sure you note when it finishes so that you can swap again next time!

#### 4. Insulation... wrap up!

You can lose up to 35% of the heat from your home through the walls and up to another 25% through the roof. Look into getting loft (270mm) and cavity wall insulation it could save you up to £265 (Energy Savings Trust). Most energy companies have discounts on these products and some schemes offer it for free, so ask your energy supplier, or contact the Energy Savings

Trust for grants and discounts in your area on **0800 512 012**.

#### 5. Heating... turn it down!

Turn down your thermostat by just 1°C and cut your fuel bills by up to 10% saving about £55 a year (EST). You'll notice the saving, but not the drop in temperature. Consider insuring your boiler for the coming winter months to avoid sudden huge repair bills. Turn radiators in unused rooms down or off. Consider using radiator panels behind your radiators to reflect heat back into the room. Use draft excluders and draft proofing tape so the heat can't escape. You could save £25 by just draft proofing (EST).

#### 6. Curtains... draw them closed!

Shutting the curtains, especially lined ones, will stop heat escaping through your windows after dark, avoid radiators or you'll lose heat.

#### 7. Hot water... use less!

Zipping up your hot water cylinder with a 75mm lagging jacket could save you £35 (EST) (they cost £10). Nip in the shower rather than a bath; a five minute shower uses about 30% less water.

#### 8. Lighting... switch!

Typically 30% of your annual electricity bill is spent on lighting your home. Switching to energy saving light bulbs will save you around £40- £65 each in their lifetime (EST). They now come in all kinds of different colours, shapes and brightness. Some even get to their full brightness instantly. By just switching off lights in empty rooms and corridors you can save up to 15% on your bill.

#### 9. Cooking... keep a lid on it!

Use just enough water to cover food, or use a steamer. Boil water for pans in a kettle (it's quicker and cheaper!). Smaller pieces of food cook more quickly and is therefore cheaper. Where you can, use the microwave rather than the oven and try to cook in bigger batches, freezing it saves time and money!

## Information

Did you know that wasted energy boiling an overfilled kettle in just one week can power a TV for a full day!

### 10. Washing... cooler!

Washing at 30°C uses about 40% less electricity than higher temperatures because about 85% of the energy a washing machine uses goes into heating the water. Try to wash full loads for washing machines, tumble dryers and dishwashers (although it's always cheaper to do your dishes by hand and dry your clothes outside where you can!)

### 11. Appliances... go all 'A' rated!

Domestic appliances account for about 47% of households energy bills. Look out for the energy efficiency rating if you buy new ones. "A" rated appliances are the most efficient and cheapest to run. Switching to an "A" rated fridge freezer, could save you £36 a year (British Gas).

### 12. Don't standby... switch off!

Appliances can use a shocking amount of their original energy consumption when on standby or left on charge, so get into the habit of turning them off. An average household can save £30-£40 a year by just doing this! (British Gas).

### 13. Monitor your own use...

Electricity monitors display your usage. This can

help to break bad habits and save you money. They are priced around £20-50 from retailers so shop around. Some energy suppliers offer free electricity monitors with their services (Eon, British Gas).

### 14. Get involved... it's a family affair!

Get the whole family involved in thinking about ways to save energy; they'll become very energy conscious and may well think of something we haven't!

### 15. If you get stuck... get help...

If you are struggling to pay your energy bills you're not alone but there is lots of help available this winter. Always phone your energy supplier first and explain that you are finding it difficult to pay your bill, they should offer you some sort of payment plan. You should also tell them if you child has a disability and ask about their Priority Services Register which could allow you further protection from disconnection.

You can get more advice at Consumer Direct **08454 04 05 06**, [www.consumerdirect.org.uk](http://www.consumerdirect.org.uk); Citizens Advice Bureaux [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) and the Home Heat Helpline on **0800 33 66 99**. If you need further advice ring our helpline on **0808 808 3555**.

## Contact a Family Freephone Helpline (Monday – Friday 9.30 – 5.00)



Staffed by a team of friendly, expert parent advisers, our helpline provides advice, information and support to families on any aspect of raising a disabled child. The helpline also provides information to professionals working with families. It has access to interpreters in over 170 languages. If you need advice on any issue about raising a disabled child, ring the Contact a Family helpline **0808 808 3555** or email [helpline@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cafamily.org.uk)

Our helpline advisers can help with:

- Benefits or tax credits issues
- Assessments and statements of special educational needs
- Details of local parent support groups
- Details of Contact a Family services in your area
- Events and parent workshops
- Information about your child's condition
- How to access help with getting a break from caring
- Details of charities which give grants to families with disabled children
- Advice and information on any other aspect of caring for a disabled child.

## Resources

### Contact your local parent forum via our national website...

You can find the contact details for local parent forums at our national website by clicking on 'families', 'parent participation', then 'contact details for forums' in the text.

The National Network of Parent Carers Forums is working in partnership with Contact a Family in their role as the new strategic lead for Parent Participation nationally. For more information about the NNPCF, please visit [www.nnpcf.org.uk](http://www.nnpcf.org.uk).

Details of the next regional meeting for Parent Forums in the North West are in progress. With the election process beginning this autumn for future NNPCF Regional reps and the North West being one of the first regions to implement the democratic process, it is important that each Parent Forum from our

region is fully involved. This is our chance to make the North West opinions count and influence!



At the regional meeting parent forums will be updated on the new support offer and learn more about the new contracted partners, there will also be an update on the grant processing.

In addition to this it is a great opportunity to share what is happening in your area with other forums and to exchange ideas. We need as many parent forums represented as possible at the regional meeting which will be organised for this autumn, to plan the way forward for the North West region and to discuss how best to run future meetings in our region.

### Scope's young disabled people start a new project...

**Trendsetters** is an exciting new project co-led by a group of young disabled people and Scope Response. The need for the project became clear from the rising number of referrals received by Scope's National Response Helpline, concerning young disabled people attending mainstream schools, but who were feeling isolated, experiencing exclusion, low self-esteem, anger and frustration. Through a closed, on-line forum and two summer workshops, Trendsetters have talked to Scope about the difficulties they face and their ideas for developing support and resources that will assist both themselves and others in a similar situation.

The participating Trendsetters told us that they need information for themselves on a range of subjects, including cerebral palsy, bullying, social and fun opportunities, transport, further education and employment options. They also wanted information available so that they can pass to their friends, school staff and others to raise awareness and understanding of disability.

The Trendsetters valued the opportunity to 'chat' safely with other young people on the forum. *'There are other people like you out there. Knowing you're not the only one helps!'* said one Trendsetter, aged 13. To ensure the continuation of this opportunity, Scope launched *Meeting Point* on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010. This is a secure young people's forum to which future callers to Scope Response (or those calling on their behalf) can be referred to meet other young disabled people. This will run alongside the *Trendsetters* forum where young people can raise issues of concern with Scope and to work jointly with them to address these.

Scope is also launching a webpage for young disabled people who they hope will be the main contributors of content for this page. The webpage will open officially in January 2012 with 'day in the life' video footage from the Trendsetters, interviews, a disability quiz, useful links and access to *Meeting Point* and the *Trendsetters* forum. For more information contact Scope Response on **0808 800 3333**.



### Drop-in sessions from Contact a Family in Blackpool and Preston...



Corriena, who is a development worker with Contact a Family, will be available for drop-in sessions at the Together Centre in Blackpool and the Pukar Centre in Preston. Corriena can offer the following at the drop in:

- Helping families to access benefits
- Helping families to access other sources of help
- Information about local and national services
- Information leaflets covering a wide range of topics including: siblings; fathers; relationships; play and leisure
- Information about events that Contact a Family are organising in the North West

**The Together Centre**, rear of Whitegate Drive, Blackpool FY3 9HF. Tel **01253 476322**. Drop-in

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November (1- 3) and Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December (1- 3).

The Together Centre is a Sure Start Children and Young People's Centre with a specific focus on providing services for families with disabled children / children with additional needs aged 0 – 19, as well as core services and activities for children and families in the local community.

**The Pukar Centre**, 3-5 Oakham Court, (off Avenham Lane), Preston PR1 3XP. Tel 01772 822 700. Drop-in on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November (12-2) and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December (12-2). Pukar provides information and advice to service users in their own languages on benefits, housing, social services & health and education services. For more information, contact Corriena: **01772 812294** or [corriena.tomkinson@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:corriena.tomkinson@cafamily.org.uk)

### How to get the most out of your GP – new Contact a Family video...



Having a good GP can be invaluable. They should take into account a parent's concerns and ideas to enable joint decisions to be made about a child's healthcare. However, a recent survey by Contact a Family showed that three quarters of families questioned felt their GP had no involvement in their child's condition.

Ella Baines, a GP and mother of a child with complex needs, has worked with Contact a Family to produce a video offering some useful advice about how to get the most out of your doctor. To watch the video please see our website [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

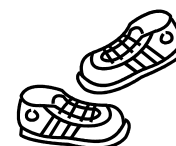
### Use the law to fight cuts to disabled children's services...



The Every Disabled Child Matters campaign of which Contact a Family is a founding member, in association with Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, has launched a template letter to help families with disabled children in England to gain an assessment for social care services. This letter is intended to help

parents who have been told that their council will not assess their disabled child in relation to short breaks or any other specialist social care service. To read the letter, please go to [http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/assessment\\_letter.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/assessment_letter.pdf)

### Would your child like to play more sport? Here's how...



Parasport is a joint initiative between the British Paralympic Association (BPA) and the professional services firm Deloitte. It's been set up to encourage as many disabled children and

people as possible to take up sport. Parasport can help you find a local club so they can get involved. Find out more at <http://www.parasport.org.uk/>

## Resources

### My Rights, Your Responsibility – new info pack for parents...



*My Rights, Your Responsibility* is a new information pack for parents of disabled children. The new resource from Council for Disabled Children (CDC) gives information on your child's rights to access activities,

community facilities and other services. For more information go to <http://www.ncb.org.uk/cdc/home.aspx> and click on wider projects.

### Does your child have a mental health condition? They can help transform services...



Puzzledout.com is a new online tool, covering England only, which gives children and young people an accessible place to speak about their experience of mental health services. Their views will help influence the services they get

from child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS, including new and existing CAMHS). To access the survey go to <http://www.puzzledout.com>

### Newlife's 'Just Can't Wait!' service...



'Just can't wait!' is an innovative service that aims to give terminally ill children essential equipment within 72 hours. It was launched by the UK's leading children's disability charity, Newlife Foundation.

Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children has created the Just Can't Wait! service to combat the delays that hamper children getting the equipment they need, when they need it most.

Currently, one in three disabled UK children are living without a piece of essential equipment at any given time, and terminally ill children are particularly at risk of dying before they get what they need. These children may have to access hospice care early, due to lack of home-use equipment.

The Just Can't Wait! service is specifically designed for children in the end stage of their life, who need equipment such as specialist beds, wheelchairs and hoists.

For more information please contact the New Life Foundation at [www.newlifecharity.co.uk](http://www.newlifecharity.co.uk) or call 0800 9020 095

### Asbah change their name to SHINE...

On 27th October, Asbah (the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus) will become:

Spina bifida  
Hydrocephalus  
Information  
Networking

Equality – **SHINE** an attractive short, memorable word which spells out the things our members feel most strongly about.

SHINE will retain the same charity no. 249338 and the same company number 877990. Donations can be made in the same way as before.



To contact SHINE please call 01733 555988, or [info@shinecharity.org.uk](mailto:info@shinecharity.org.uk) or look on their website at [www.shinecharity.org.uk](http://www.shinecharity.org.uk)

## General Events

### 'Autism, a Hands on Approach' conference in Stockport...

The conference organised by professionals and parents from Stockport in partnership, discuss key concerns, practical issues and sharing evidence based approaches. It will be held on Wednesday **2nd November**, from 8.50 a.m. to 5.00 p.m at the Pinewood House Education Centre, Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport. The

conference fee is £100 for professionals and £35 for parents. This includes refreshments, delegate pack and certificate. For further information and booking forms. please contact Tanya Farley **07966 399 709**.



### Manchester Parent Carer Network Information Sharing Event...

Manchester Parent Carer Network are holding an information sharing event in partnership with Contact a Family on Saturday **19th November** from 10am until 3pm at Manchester Carers Forum, London Scottish House, 24 Mount Street, M2 3NN.

This event will be a one-stop shop of information and support for all parents and organisations, relevant to Manchester parent

carers. If you are an organisation or part of a parents group and would like a stall please contact Kerrie at Manchester Parent Carer Network.

For further information and booking forms please contact Kerrie Wilson, Parent Participation Worker on 075813 19687 or 0161 819 2226 or [kerrie@manchestercarersforum.org.uk](mailto:kerrie@manchestercarersforum.org.uk)

### Kidz Up North...

Come along to the Reebok Stadium (Premier Exhibition Suite) in Bolton on **24th November** and visit the free exhibition dedicated to children with disabilities and special needs, their families and the professionals who work with them.

There will be over 100 exhibitors offering advice and information on funding, mobility, seating, beds, communication, access,

education, toys, transport, style, sensory, sports and leisure. Running alongside the events are free seminars for parents and professionals.

For visitors free entry tickets and for more information please contact the organisers Disabled Living on 0161 607 8200 or email [info@disabledliving.co.uk](mailto:info@disabledliving.co.uk)



## Contact a Family Events

**Contact a Family** North West are holding two free cinema event at the Odeon Cinema, in the Trafford Centre and Blackpool, for families with disabled children. We have exclusive use of a screen in both cinemas for families to enjoy the new film, Arthur Christmas.

Come and join us to find out just how Santa delivers all his presents in just one night! The story of 'Arthur Christmas' takes you behind the scenes to let you in on the secret. Set on Christmas night, you will see Santa's ultra-high-tech operation hidden beneath the North Pole and follow Arthur (Santa's son), as he embarks on a mission to deliver a missing present before the Christmas morning. Arthur Christmas is produced by Aardman Animation Productions, (makers of Wallace and Gromit and Flushed Away).



### Trafford Centre Cinema Event...

For more information and to book your places please ring Corriena.

**Bookings can only be taken from 8<sup>th</sup> November.** You can phone Corriena on **01772 812 294**.

**Date:** Sunday **November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Time:** Arrive at 10.00 for film to start at 10.30 (no trailers)

**Venue:** Odeon Cinema, The Trafford Centre Manchester, M17 8AA.

**Film:** Arthur Christmas (not in 3D)

**Certificate:** U

### Blackpool Cinema Event...

For more information and to book your places please ring Corriena.

**Bookings can only be taken from 8<sup>th</sup> November.** You can phone Corriena on **01772 812 294**.

**Date:** Saturday **3<sup>rd</sup> December**

**Time:** Arrive at 10.00 for film to start at 10.30 (no trailers)

**Venue:** Odeon Cinema, Rigby Road, Blackpool, FY1 5EP.

**Film:** Arthur Christmas (not in 3D)

**Certificate:** U

#### Don't forget to take a look at our...

Podcasts, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter discussions by clicking on the links on the website [www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk) You will find lots of information and advice there including:

- Publications and leaflets
- News stories
- A to Z of medical conditions
- Fundraising activities
- Our Cash Counts (on-line benefits advice)
- Making Contact (to get in touch with other parents)
- Support for professionals

#### Donate by text to Contact a Family...

If you would like to donate to Contact a Family we have an easy to use text service. It's quick and convenient – simply text 'FAMILY' to 70007 and donate £3 to Contact a Family. You will be charged £3 plus one message at your standard network rate. Contact a Family will receive a minimum of £2.40 from each message sent. All your money will help us to carry on the services we offer to parents and is much appreciated.