

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

incorporating  
**The Lady Hoare Trust**

**in contact**



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

**Spring 2011. Issue 29**

**Charity No. 284912**



**Dads and their children have fun at  
Coventry City Football Club!**



We asked the children and young people what they enjoyed most and they said '*the changing rooms*', '*seeing the pitch from high up*', '*meeting Lee Carsley and getting my bag signed*', and the dads particularly enjoyed meeting Dave Busst and Lee, as well as seeing the inside and outside of the stadium.

**Check out page 3  
for events coming up over  
the next few months...**

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## Biggest shake up for Special Educational Needs (SEN) since the introduction of statements suggested by SEN and Disability Green Paper

The SEN and Disability Green Paper is now out for consultation and is suggesting a radical shake up of the existing system. The government says the present SEN system is bureaucratic and bewildering and education, health and social care are not joined together.

These are just some of the proposals

- Early identification and assessment by health visitors and other professionals
- By 2014 statements of SEN will be replaced with Education, Health and Care Plans (birth – 25) with a reduction in assessment timescale from 26 – 20 weeks
- There will be the option of a personal budget by 2014 with trained key workers
- Clear information about funding that supports the child
- There will a choice of state funded school
- Mediation will be emphasised rather than tribunal
- Schools will make a distinction between pupils with SEN and those who just require in-school support
- School Action and School Action Plus will be replaced by one school-based category
- Special schools will share their expertise
- There will be more support at transition for vocational and work related learning and employment

However a **Green Paper** does not necessarily mean a commitment to action but is often the first step towards changing the law. That's why it's really important that we tell the government what we think. The consultation period ends on 30th June and you can make your comments in a number of ways. Email Una at Contact a Family, [una.summerson@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:una.summerson@cafamily.org.uk) or ring her on 020 7608 8742. Post your views on our Facebook or twitter sites. Speak to your local support group or parent carer forum or go on line at <http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/>

**Your views can make a difference**

## Wednesday May 11th 2011 - Hardest Hit March

On Wednesday May 11<sup>th</sup>, thousands of disabled people, their families and supporters from all over the country are coming together to protest with one voice outside the Houses of Parliament and make their feelings known about the impact of spending cuts on disabled people.

The day of protest, organised by UKDPC and major disability organisations, will send a strong and powerful message to the Government and you're invited to join them. Disabled people will be marching to make sure that the Government hears their voice. The proposed cuts to vital benefits and services will have a massive impact on disabled people's independence and quality of life and will push many people into poverty – the Government must act now to make sure that disabled people are not the Hardest Hit.

Thousands of disabled people are expected to descend on London and join in on the day, so if you want to join in you are asked to sign up to say you are coming and which parts of the day you'll be joining for

Please contact [info@hardesthit.org.uk](mailto:info@hardesthit.org.uk) for details on signing up.

**UKDPC**  
United Kingdom  
Disabled People's Council

**DBC**

## Contact a Family West Midlands events...



### Family day out...at Ludlow Castle

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2011 from 10am – 3pm

An exciting day out for all the family including castle tours, animal man and living history displays!

So bring your picnic and join us for a great day out!  
Spaces are limited so call Jan or Liz to book places on  
0121 415 4624

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011, we will be having a workshop covering **common toileting problems and solutions**. Promocon will be leading the workshop which will take place in Stafford. Call 0121 415 4624 for further details.



On page 6 you will see that we are working in partnership with Irwin Mitchell Solicitors in Birmingham, to put on a workshop for parents about how to **access services for disabled children** and get the right advice and support.

Places are limited so please call Jan or Liz to book your place, on 0121 415 4624

## Past events

In February, dad's and their children came to our event at **Coventry City Football Club**. We had a guided tour with Dave Busst, seeing everything from the changing rooms and the manager's office to the pitch side. A lovely lunch was then provided and afterwards everyone had the opportunity to meet Coventry City player and Captain, Lee Carsley. Lee stayed on to sign autographs and for photographs. Everyone had an amazing day!

More recently, we held our **Sleep Workshop** in Leamington Spa. A number of parents came along to hear Pattie from Cerebra suggest strategies and problem solving techniques, regarding their child's sleep problems. We are able to offer this session again in other areas, so please contact Jan on 0121 415 4624 if you are interested.



We have also been providing some Disability Awareness and DLA / Finance training to professionals working children with additional needs. So far, we've met with a number of professionals including Family support Workers, Social Workers, Childcare workers and Centre Managers. We have also put on DLA workshops for parents

## Spotlight on...

We hold a database of many groups, service providers and provisions throughout the West Midlands, and try to feature just some of them in our Newsletter. If you would like us to spread the word about your group, please let Liz know on 0121 415 4624.

### **S.N.A.P**

#### **Special Needs Adventure Playground.**

Providing a safe and secure adventure play area for children with special needs.

Outdoor area and indoor soft play area, ball pool and sensory room.

Available for school/group bookings and children's parties. Also runs toddler sessions, after school sessions and computer club. Special needs toy library available.

Pye Green Road, Cannock, WS11 5WA  
01543 579 286

Email: [info@snapcannock.co.uk](mailto:info@snapcannock.co.uk)

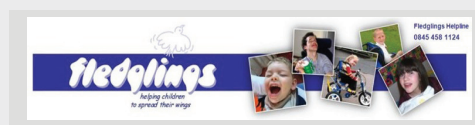


**Fledglings** is a charity which helps parents and carers of disabled children and those with special needs to find solutions to practical problems of everyday living.

If you need help for a disabled or sick child, or want a copy of the product brochure, please contact Fledglings on

0845 458 1124

Email: [enquiries@fledglings.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@fledglings.org.uk)  
[www.fledglings.org.uk](http://www.fledglings.org.uk)



### **Dudley autistic support group**

#### **CHAOS!**

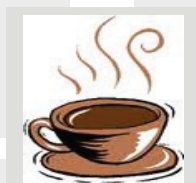
A new club for children on the autistic spectrum and their siblings, aged 5 – 12 years.

Every Saturday (including school holidays) at Lower Gornal Youth Centre from 10 til 1.

Must be registered to attend, see

[www.clubchaos.org.uk](http://www.clubchaos.org.uk)

Or call 07597 575 277



### **Sandwell Parents for Disabled Children**

Have a range of events and activities during the coming months. Please call 0121 544 8880 or check out the website at

[www.sp-dc.org](http://www.sp-dc.org)



Get together online with young disabled people.  
Are you aged 10 – 18 years?

The meeting point forum is there for you – to talk to others, swap ideas, share views or anything else.



[www.scope.org.uk/meetingpoint](http://www.scope.org.uk/meetingpoint)

## Spotlight on...

### Looking ahead to the school holidays...

#### Discounts and days out...

[www.discountvouchers.co.uk](http://www.discountvouchers.co.uk)  
[www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)  
[www.special-needs-kids.co.uk](http://www.special-needs-kids.co.uk)  
[www.daytrippers.org.uk](http://www.daytrippers.org.uk)

#### Holidays...

[www.newmantrust.org](http://www.newmantrust.org)  
[www.accessatlast.com](http://www.accessatlast.com)  
[www.disabledholidaydirectory.co.uk](http://www.disabledholidaydirectory.co.uk)  
[www.harriet-davis-trust.org.uk](http://www.harriet-davis-trust.org.uk)  
[www.reactcharity.org](http://www.reactcharity.org)  
[www.otw.org.uk](http://www.otw.org.uk)  
[www.3hfund.org.uk](http://www.3hfund.org.uk)  
[www.canbedone.co.uk](http://www.canbedone.co.uk)

#### Funders / Charities...

Family Fund 0845 130 4542  
Happy Days 01582 755 999  
[www.farrelltrust.org.uk](http://www.farrelltrust.org.uk)

Contact a Family produces a guide called 'Holidays, play and leisure'.  
Please call if you would like a copy. (Also available to download).  
If you don't have access to the internet,  
please call Liz or Jan on 0121 415 4624 and we'll help you.



### Ring and Ride

West Midlands  
Special Needs Transport



Following its successful introduction during the summer holidays in Birmingham, **Ring and Go** has now been extended to include Sandwell and Wolverhampton.

The Ring & Go service is aimed at helping disabled children and young people to get to their favorite places during school holidays. It means they will be able to travel independently in a safe environment and provides them with a better opportunity to get involved in activities in the community.

The service is completely free for children and young people up to the age of 19. People with a Concessionary Pass, nNetwork Card or a Disabled pass will also travel free. People without a pass will be charged the equivalent of a local bus fare. 16 year olds or under will be charged half of a local bus fare and 5 years or under will not be required to pay.

This service has been made possible through the funding provided by Centro as part of its contribution to *Ring and Ride* over the next three years.

The fully accessible minibuses will pick young people up from their front doors and take them where they want to go. They are available anytime including evenings and weekends and friends and family can come along too.

The service is available in Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.  
To book a Ring & Go bus call 0121 446 6172 or visit [www.ringandride.org](http://www.ringandride.org)

## Spotlight on...



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

# ACCESSING SERVICES

**A support and advice workshop**  
A FREE one day workshop providing practical advice and support to carers and families of disabled children.

**Topics include:**

- Dealing with disabled children's rights
- What families are entitled to and what they should be asking for
- Property and affairs
- Applying for benefits
- Financial arrangements for children approaching transition

**Date:** 12th May 2011  
**Time:** 10.00am – 2.15pm  
**Venue:** Irwin Mitchell Solicitors  
Imperial House  
31 Temple Street  
Birmingham, B2 5DB

Kindly supported by  
**irwinmitchell**  
SOLICITORS

If you would like to book a place please RSVP with your details to: Jan Eastwood or Liz Reynolds on 0121 415 4624

(Early booking is essential due to limited spaces and on a first come first serve basis)



The aim of **The Sequal Trust** is to fundraise to provide communication aids for disabled people, regardless of age, race or gender. The charity covers disabilities which include speech/movement and/or learning difficulties such as autism, Downs syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and more.

Communication aids provided are many and varied, and can range from specialised computer systems to synthesized speech aids.

If you know someone who may benefit from The Sequal Trust, please contact them on 01691 624 222.

[www.thesequaltrust.org.uk](http://www.thesequaltrust.org.uk)



### New stage schools in Kidderminster.

The MiXiT stageschool runs every Saturday from 10am – 3pm at BiLD, Champion House, Green Street, Kidderminster.

MiXiT are working with Worcestershire County Council's three year strategy for personalisation. MiXiT welcome everyone who has a direct payment, individual budget or individual service fund. However individuals can also self fund to access this service.

To find out more about fees, hours or if you need help and advice on accessing funds please contact Joanne Bekis on 07532 008 120 or email: [jo@mixitdays.com](mailto:jo@mixitdays.com).

Also check the website at [www.mixitmusic.co.uk](http://www.mixitmusic.co.uk)

## Spotlight on...



**Megan Baker House** near Leominster in Herefordshire currently offers free conductive education for children with cerebral palsy, dyspraxia and other motor related disorders

Sessions are available at the centre during school holidays and some Saturdays. There is also an outreach service in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. Contact MBH on 01568 616 179 or visit the website at [www.meganbakerhouse.org.uk](http://www.meganbakerhouse.org.uk) for further details.

Now in its third year, **National Family Week** is the biggest annual celebration of families and family life in the UK.

National Family Week is backed by all major political parties and over 180 national and thousands of not-for-profit organisations showcasing their work and support for families in their community, throughout the country and around the world.



Over 6,000 community events, from family fun days and picnics to storytimes and sports days, run by charities, community groups and local authorities in parks, libraries, town centres and community halls across the country, attracting more than a million attendees.

Check out the website at [www.nationalfamiliesweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalfamiliesweek.co.uk) to find out about an event near you!

### **RELATIONSHIP SUPPORT FROM RELATE BIRMINGHAM AVAILABLE FOR PARENTS RAISING A DISABLED CHILD**



Subsidised relationship support for parents with a disabled child is now available from local charity, Relate Birmingham.

Having a disabled child can put family relationships under extra strain. Couples caring for a disabled child are at greater risk of problems in their relationship and relationship breakdown, which is why Relate are pleased to be able to offer a tailored support package to help people enjoy family life.

When parents are stressed and under pressure, this can have a big impact on children, which is why it's so important that parents are able to access this bit of extra support.

Parents interested in the scheme will be able to access four sessions of relationship counselling either as a family or a couple in their local area, including Solihull, Oldbury, Worcester and Sandwell. Please check the website to find your local office at <http://www.relate.org.uk/news/45/index.html> or by calling Relate Birmingham on 0121 643 1638.

## Spotlight on...



### Love is in the air...

Congratulations to our Information Officer here in the West Midlands, Liz who recently married her partner Pete after many years together!

Also we wish all the best to Amy, our Family Worker, who marries Alex in May!

Good luck to all of you and we wish you the very best for the future!

**If you are reading somebody else's copy of 'in contact' please let us know so that we can add you to our database! You'll then find out about information, up and coming events, and activities straight away!**

**If your young person is over 19 years of age, may we remind you that whilst you are welcome to continue receiving our newsletter, our funding is for families with disabled children and young people up to 19 years old.**

Here's how you can help us at Contact a Family, to continue our good work...

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.

### Give as you shop

Every time you shop on-line you could be donating money to Contact a Family, at no extra cost to yourself. [Buy.at](#) offers a portal through to a host of well-known retailers - including M&S, Asda, and Staples. If you click on the links through the Contact a Family web shop on [Buy.at](#) we will receive a commission on any purchases you make.

The Editor retains the right to omit, include or edit any contributions. The views and suggestions in this newsletter are those of individual contributions and not necessarily supported by Contact a Family. Contact a Family cannot accept responsibility for any goods or services mentioned in or enclosed in this newsletter.



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

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**Amy Turner – Family Worker**  
Tel: 0121 329 2061

**Rizwana Pathan – Volunteer Parent  
Representative (Warwickshire)**  
Tel: 024 7634 9612

**National Freephone Helpline**  
0808 808 3555