

Annual Review

How we made a difference in 2008/09



A message from Rosey and Srabani

Families with disabled children face many challenges. Our support ensures that families are informed and feel more confident about their own knowledge and skills to manage better on a day-to-day basis.

This enables them to make contact with other parents and helps them find information to make a real difference to their lives.

Last year we reached 300,000 families through our helpline, one-to-one support from our parent volunteers and family workers, and through our groundbreaking presence on social networking sites.

During 2008/09 we continued to increase our influence in putting disabled children and their families high on the agenda and making their voices heard through our work as lead partner in the campaigns of the four countries of the UK:

- Every Disabled Child Matters
- For Scotland's Disabled Children
- Disabled Children Matter Wales
- Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance in Northern Ireland.

“ We spend a lot of our time fighting for things for Katie. We had to wait over three months to get a suitable bath seat. It has made such a difference to Katie's quality of life that I don't know why we had to wait so long ” **Parent**

We want the Government to make spending on services for disabled children and their families a priority so that families like Katie's don't have to wait so long for necessities.

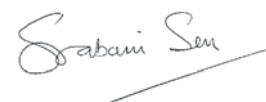
Looking forward

As we look to the future and celebrate our 30th anniversary in 2009/10, there is still much to be done to ensure families with disabled children get the services and support they deserve so that they can live the lives they choose to live, and achieve their full potential.

We want to reach and support **all** the families with disabled children in the United Kingdom. We plan to become an even greater force for change to ensure families get what they need. We are exploring innovative ways to achieve these goals in these challenging times and your support is vital to help us do this.



Rosey Foster
Chair



Srabani Sen
Chief Executive



Our vision

Our vision is that all families with disabled children are empowered to live the lives they choose to live, and achieve their full potential, for themselves, for the communities they live in and for society.

Our mission and purpose is to remove the barriers imposed by society that prevent families with disabled children achieving their full potential, and to empower these families to live the lives they want to lead.

About families with disabled children

- In the UK, there are 770,000 disabled children under the age of 16. That's one child in 20.
- Ninety-nine per cent of disabled children live at home and are supported by their families.
- Disabled children are more likely to live in poverty.
- Only 16 per cent of mothers with disabled children work, compared to 61 per cent of other mothers.
- It costs up to three times as much to raise a disabled child, as it does to raise a child without disabilities.
- Only eight per cent of families get care services from their local authority.
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are nine times more likely to be expelled than their peers.



Credit: Jeremy Larkin

Supporting families across the UK

Families with disabled children face the challenges of living in poverty, coping with isolation, trying to find information and getting their voices heard by professionals and decision makers. We support families in meeting these challenges head on.

Providing information

We handled over 28,000 individual enquiries through our helpline, staff, volunteers and family workers from parents and professionals. In addition, our London offices responded to approximately 8,000 enquiries. We distributed more than 200,000 copies of our parent guides and many thousands of newsletters continue to be produced by our teams across the UK.

“It was a relief to find someone who actually seemed to understand and care about our problems” **Helpline caller**

Our helpline is a ‘one-stop shop’ providing advice and support whenever families need answers, from providing medical information about a diagnosis through to giving detailed advice about benefits, services and support available. With specialist welfare benefits and immigration advisers, we receive 20,000 calls a year. The helpline has access to interpreters in over 170 languages.

We launched a new pack *About Diagnosis*, aimed at helping parents through the process of diagnosis. We continue to produce our unique acclaimed *Directory – The essential guide to medical conditions, disabilities and support*. We now also provide guides and updates in a resource pack for Children’s Centres and Family Information Centres.



Credit: Moreag Livingstone



The parents' role in informing and educating

Our team of Volunteer Parent 'Reps' continues to support families through peer support at a local level, signposting families to sources of relevant help and support.

Our Reps have an overview of families' needs and the gaps in local services. This vital information is fed into local service planning to ensure that the needs of families are taken into account when decisions are made. Our Reps also give talks to help educate professionals at schools and in health settings.

The ten Reps in Scotland alone made contact with almost 7,000 parents and professionals in their local areas.

Supporting families online

“ This website feels like heaven to me! I've felt alone for so long, but am now finding people who I can talk to who understand. My son is seven and has two disabilities ...which only he in the world has got, which is maybe why I've felt so alone ” **Visitor to Contact a Family on Facebook**

We are bringing families together through our activity on a range of social networking sites, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Second Life. We helped almost 80,000 parents this way last year, and we continue to take up the opportunities offered by the new trends in social media.

Our websites www.cafamily.org.uk and www.makingcontact.org attracted more than 3 million visitors in 2008/09. Our www.makingcontact.org site enables families to get in touch with others, across the UK and worldwide, via a confidential email service. A new forum feature allows discussions about caring for disabled children.

Our Family Support Services

Our team of Family Workers provides one-to-one support to families caring for a disabled child across the UK over the telephone, at drop-in sessions and through home visits or email. Last year we supported more than 3,000 families and professionals through one-to-one or group work.

Help includes claiming benefits, accessing other sources of support, and negotiating with statutory agencies such as health, social services or education. We also assist at key transition points, such as starting school or moving to adult services, providing information about local help, and a wide range of other issues.

In Scotland, the Family Worker Service supported 67 families through periods of crisis.

“I recently had a family support worker from Contact a Family. She was fantastic and we received more support and financial assistance in six months than we ever did in 15 years. In our case, they provided more help than any statutory body. Everyone should know about people like her” **Parent in Scotland**



In Northern Ireland, our Family Support Officers dealt with 935 enquiries from parents and professionals during the year.

“A few days after the diagnosis, I lifted the phone in despair and called Contact a Family. I spoke to a friendly voice on the other end reassuring me and arranging for a Family Support Officer to visit me. She has thrown our family a lifeline. I don't know how we could ever thank her for giving us hope and supporting us – and most of all not letting us feel alone”

Parent of a child with a rare genetic disorder

“The Family Worker from Contact a Family has been a boon to both our team and our client group. In the Community Children's Nurses' world, she is now a mainstay and we often turn to her... when statutory services cannot provide for the child and family”

Community Children's Nurse, SE Health & Social Care Trust

Events, workshops and trips

We continue to support parents in overcoming isolation through a range of events providing practical support and leisure activities in many different areas. Our London projects arrange around 400 events a year, including trips to the seaside, London attractions, river boat cruises and picnics in the park. They also hold pamper sessions, workshops and even arrange short holidays.

These activities underpin the one-to-one support work provided by our team of Family Workers. They help them engage with other families in similar circumstances, and support them on their journey through the complex maze of services and entitlements. They provide a holistic and ongoing service based on individual need, and they empower parents and carers to make the best choices for their families.

“I relaxed and cleared my mind and the children had a great time. The massage was wonderful, a very pleasurable experience”

Parent

Other regional activities include events to attract families who don't naturally ask for help and enable them to share their experiences and build their own support networks. In the West Midlands, we recruited a group of parent supporters from South Asian communities, enabling them to reach families in these communities who are often the most isolated.



In the North West, we introduced events for teenagers and workshops for dads, which attracted new families. These events fill a gap that families experience in finding accessible leisure activities to participate in with their children.

“It's good for men to understand how other dads are feeling”

Dad attending a Dads' workshop in the North West

“I have grown as a person, learnt new skills – I have gained more confidence and learnt to be more assertive. It's changed my life!”

Parent attending training in the West Midlands

In Wales, we ran 24 workshops in 10 different counties with 826 disabled children and their families attending.

“Brilliant! Very well delivered and an excellent trainer – an enjoyable day and nice to meet other parents” **Parent**



Our work in Children's Centres

This year we have extended our reach with Children's Centres across England. We delivered advice and drop-in sessions, information days, and workshops for parents along with disability awareness training for Children's Centre staff. Helping Children's Centres to host support groups is increasingly making families with disabled children feel more welcome and confident about using their services. Our Children's Centre team has worked with 27 local authorities.

In Lambeth, we introduced a new Children's Centres family work service for families with children under five in April 2008.

Reducing poverty

“ We're constantly struggling to keep afloat financially and are currently in arrears with utility bills. With prices rising all the time, I'm worried for the future ” **Parent**

Families with disabled children have been particularly rocked by the soaring cost of living. Our *Counting the Costs* survey, published in August 2008, found that one in six disabled children lives in a household struggling to afford food and heating.

“ Our survey findings paint a shocking picture of what these often vulnerable families are experiencing ” **Srabani Sen, Chief Executive**

Our successful *Pounds for Parents* campaign, funded by the True Colours Trust, continued to improve the take-up of benefits and other forms of financial support for families with disabled children. We also produced a range of information guides and continue to provide advice through our free helpline to enable parents to claim the benefits and tax credits to which they're entitled. Our helpline and family workers received more than 5,000 enquiries about benefits during the year.



Dylan's story

I want to let you know how much my family benefits from your organisation. When we were told that Dylan wouldn't live past his first birthday we were lost and didn't know who to turn to...

I can honestly say that without the Contact a Family Worker's support we would not have got through that hard time. She always went the extra mile and still does... most of all she made us feel like she was really there for us.

I became concerned about Dylan's development when he was seven and a half months old. Eventually a diagnosis of Tay Sachs disease was made. We were given no information about the condition but were told that Dylan would die before he was a year old. When I looked for information myself, I found children with Tay Sachs have a life expectancy of between three and five years of age.

I found doctors with expertise in Tay Sachs in Germany and because nothing appropriate was available locally we were able to gain a referral. Dylan was assessed as suitable for a stem cell transplant. This was a difficult time – my husband and I lived in Germany for over three months while Dylan underwent treatment. Neither of us speaks German and we were away from the support of our family.

Now three, Dylan loves music, massage and sensory activities. He needs a lot of support – he has no speech, is fed by a naso-gastric tube and takes many medications. Dylan has recently started a local special needs school and we are very happy with the support he gets.

Dylan and his family are from Belfast, Northern Ireland

Campaigning for change across the UK

We continue to ensure that the issues affecting families with disabled children are on the agenda

Campaigning in England

We are a leading member of the Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) campaign, influencing Government to ensure delivery of the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme.

This strategy aims to transform services for disabled children and their families in England and EDCM has worked closely with the main political parties to ensure that the needs of disabled children and their families are given priority in policy agendas.

Empowering parents

We are actively working to empower parents to improve the way services are delivered. As a key partner in Together for Disabled Children, we have supported the development of parent participation across England.

Parent participation involves parents and professionals working together to make decisions that improve the lives of families with disabled children. Funded by central government, we have helped establish parent participation activity in every local authority area across England.

“I’m happy to say things have changed under Aiming High in this area – parents are now equal partners in the decision-making process around changes to disabled children’s services”

Parent in Hampshire

“A great opportunity to learn from people in other areas. New ideas and expectations”

Parent attending North East regional network meeting

In London we became a lead partner on the Aiming High Project Board in Southwark, and re-launched the Southwark Parent Carer Council, hosting a Parent Carer Conference at Millwall Football Club in February 2009, attended by over 100 parents.

The Ealing and Southall offices held a similar conference in March 2009 attended by 90 parents, with guest speakers from the local authority, and from Ealing’s Parents’ Forum.

Campaigning in Scotland

We have been instrumental in driving the development of for Scotland's Disabled Children coalition (fSDC). Established in 2007 to secure rights and justice for disabled children, young people and their families in Scotland, fSDC works with national and local government, measuring the improvement in the delivery of services for disabled children and their families.

Translating good intentions

Following meetings with Alex Salmond, First Minister, and Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, the Liaison Project was set up in February 2009. The Liaison Project's aim is to translate good intentions into better lives. And in the words of Adam Ingram:

“ We agreed that the establishment of a liaison project would be valuable in driving forward change. The project will address key issues such as respite, transition, child care and the review of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and will serve as a conduit between the Scottish Government and significant players in the sector ”

Campaigning in Wales

Contact a Family Wales continued to play a major role in the Disabled Children Matter Wales campaign during 2008/09. In response, the Welsh Assembly Government produced *We are on the Way*, a policy agenda to improve the lives of disabled children and young people. They allocated approximately £10 million over three years for public services across Wales, including inclusive play, short breaks, early support materials, changing places facilities and a benefit uptake campaign.

Campaigning in Northern Ireland

The Children with Disabilities Strategic Alliance (CDSA) is an alliance of voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland working with disabled children. The group focuses on informing and influencing strategic policy issues that impact on children and young people with disabilities. Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) jointly co-chairs CDSA with Disability Action.

As a member of the CDSA Campaigns sub group, we are currently working on the launch of the manifesto, a publicity campaign and will be working towards developing a number of campaigns over the next three years.

Our finances

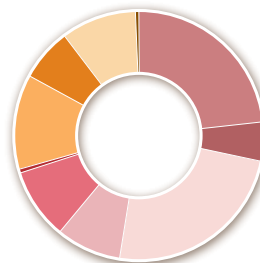
Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2009

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2009 Total £	2008 Total £
Incoming resources				
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds</i>				
Voluntary income	50,000	855,675	905,675	624,156
Rental income	-	-	-	4,483
Investment income	-	46,501	46,501	54,722
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities</i>				
Community projects	1,299,109	-	1,299,109	1,480,140
Regional and national development	1,285,093	-	1,285,093	1,350,139
Parent advice, information and support	1,040,047	159,754	1,199,801	1,067,037
Parent participation	62,000	383,164	445,164	142,793
<i>Other incoming resources</i>	-	8,530	8,530	112,011
Total incoming resources	3,736,249	1,453,624	5,189,873	4,835,481
Resources expended				
<i>Cost of generating funds:</i>				
Fundraising	-	565,024	565,024	572,075
Rent expenses	-	-	-	2,949
	-	565,024	565,024	575,024
<i>Charitable expenditure:</i>				
Community projects	1,254,717	19,345	1,274,062	1,598,873
Regional and national development	1,165,322	57,973	1,223,295	1,212,548
Parent advice, information and support	1,084,025	170,458	1,254,483	1,254,806
Parent participation	34,009	273,301	307,310	170,620
<i>Total charitable expenditure</i>	3,538,073	521,077	4,059,150	4,236,847
Governance costs		64,316	64,316	47,910
Other resources expended	-	-	-	85,410
Total resources expended	3,538,073	1,150,417	4,688,490	4,945,191
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	198,176	303,207	501,383	(109,710)
Unrealised losses on investment assets	-	(161,277)	(161,277)	(101,658)
Net movement in funds	198,176	141,930	340,106	(211,368)
Reconciliation of funds				
Funds at the start of the year	1,576,978	1,141,376	2,718,354	2,929,722
Funds at the end of the year	1,775,154	1,283,306	3,058,460	2,718,354

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2009

	2009 £	2008 £
Fixed assets		
Tangible fixed assets	1,647,727	1,673,366
Investments	357,118	502,155
	<u>2,004,845</u>	<u>2,175,521</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	397,057	356,584
Cash at bank and in hand	1,289,045	586,000
	<u>1,686,102</u>	<u>942,584</u>
Liabilities		
Creditors:		
amounts falling due within one year	611,000	357,962
	<u>611,000</u>	<u>357,962</u>
Net current assets	<u>1,075,102</u>	<u>584,622</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>3,079,947</u>	<u>2,760,143</u>
Creditors: amounts due after one year	<u>21,487</u>	<u>41,789</u>
Net assets	<u>3,058,460</u>	<u>2,718,354</u>
Funds		
Restricted funds	1,775,154	1,576,978
Unrestricted funds		
Designated funds	50,000	198,236
General funds	1,233,306	943,140
	<u>1,283,306</u>	<u>943,140</u>
Total funds	<u>3,058,460</u>	<u>2,718,354</u>

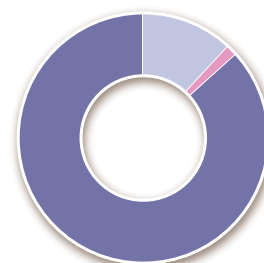
Income



Income

	£	Percentage
Central government grants	1,203,941	23%
Nation government grants	272,144	5%
Local government grants	1,244,730	24%
Big Lottery Fund	437,218	8%
Charitable Trusts	483,366	9%
Companies	5,400	0.5%
Special events/other	648,962	12%
Legacies	353,598	8%
Donations from individuals	494,013	10%
Investment income	46,501	0.5%
TOTAL	5,189,873	100%

Expenditure



Expenditure

	£	Percentage
Cost of generating funds	565,024	12%
Governance costs	64,316	1%
Total charitable expenditure	4,059,150	87%
TOTAL	4,688,490	100%

Our finances

Summarised financial statements

The summarised financial information detailed on pages 12 and 13 does not constitute the statutory accounts, but a summary of information relating to both the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet, and notes thereon, contained within the full financial statements. The only exception to this is an analysis of fundraising costs which is given in the Trustees' Annual Report which accompanies the financial statements.

Those financial statements have been externally audited by Sayer Vincent and an unqualified audit report was issued relating to those accounts. Those financial statements, which were approved on 15 September 2009, can be obtained, along with the Audit Report and the Trustees Report, from our Head Office at 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN. The financial statements have been submitted to the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Rosey Foster

Chair of Trustees
20 October 2009

Independent auditors' statement to the trustees of Contact a Family

We have examined the summarised financial statements of Contact a Family.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the charities SORP.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statement with the full financial statements and Trustees' Annual Report. We also read the other information contained in the Annual Review and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 "The auditors' statement on the summary financial statements" issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of Contact a Family for the year ended 31 March 2009.

Sayer Vincent

Registered Auditors
20 October 2009

Our donors

Contact a Family would like to thank the individuals, companies, trusts and statutory bodies who have so generously provided funding over the past year. The following is a list of those who have contributed £5,000 or above.

BBC Children in Need
Beatrice Laing Trust
Big Lottery Fund
Carnegie Dunfermline Trust
Charles Dunstone Trust
Children's Fund for Lewisham
Children's Fund for Northern Ireland
Cornwall County Council
Cornwall PCT
Department for Children, Schools and Families
Department of Health
Department for Trade and Industry Financial Inclusion Fund in partnership with Citizens Advice
Durham PCT
Eveson Charitable Trust
Four Acre Trust
Henry Smith Charity in Wales
HM Revenue and Customs
London Boroughs of Ealing, Lambeth, Lewisham, Sutton and Merton
London Councils
Luton Borough Council
Morgan Foundation
National Assembly for Wales
North British Hotels Trust
Northern Ireland Executive
Northern Rock Foundation
Parenting Fund
Peacock Charitable Trust
Scottish Executive
Southwark Strategic Services
Southwark Children's Centres
SureStart
Three Guineas Trust
True Colours Trust
Wandsworth Corporation
Waterloo Foundation

Board of Trustees Professional advisers

Rosey Foster (Chair)
Imelda Redmond (Vice Chair)
Peter Phillips (Treasurer)

Dr Kay Caldwell
Philip Conway
Lady Susanna Crawford
Robin Hindle Fisher
Lynne Hill
Jolanta Lasota
Sheila Messider
Reuben Parkinson
John Phillipson
Joanne Tanner
Bradley Theobald
Caroline Vaughan

Patrons

Nick Crean
Georgina David
Henry Hoare
Francesca Martinez
Lady Morris of Kenwood
Nigel Nicholls
Baroness Nicholson of
Winterbourne
Roy Noble MBE
Vivienne Parry
Lord and Lady Rix
Kerry Rolfe
Philippa Russell OBE
Dr Richard Smith CBE
Claire Tomalin
Elinor and Dafydd Wigley AM
Professor Lord Winston

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
Nine Brindleyplace
4 Oozells Square
Birmingham B1 2HB

Solicitors

Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill
Putney
London SW15 6AB

Auditors

Sayer Vincent
Chartered Accountants
and Registered Auditors
8 Angel Gate
City Road
London EC1V 2SJ

Honorary President

Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green
*Children's Commissioner
for England*



Donation form

giftaid it



Your details

Title First name

Last name

Address

Postcode

Tel no

Email

Donation details

I wish to give £ to Contact a Family

I enclose a cheque made payable to 'Contact a Family'

I enclose a CAF voucher made out to 'Contact a Family'

I want Contact a Family to reclaim tax on all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise.

I understand I must be paying at least as much income or capital gains tax as the charity reclaims in the tax year.

I confirm I am a UK taxpayer.

Signature

Date

If you are able to support Contact a Family's essential work please complete this form and return it in an envelope with your donation to: Fundraising Dept, Contact a Family, FREEPOST LON8801, LONDON EC1B 1EE

Data Protection: Contact a Family is committed to the confidentiality of your personal information. Personal data will be held and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will not be shared with any third parties for commercial use.



UK office

209-211 City Road
London EC1V 1JN
Tel 020 7608 8700
Fax 020 7608 8701
www.cafamily.org.uk

National offices

Northern Ireland Tel 028 9262 7552
Scotland Tel 0131 659 2930
Wales/Cymru Tel 029 2039 6624

Regional offices

North East England Tel 0191 213 6300
North West England Tel 0161 743 0700
West Midlands Tel 0121 415 4624

London offices

Ealing Tel 020 8810 8151
Lambeth Tel 020 7326 5270
Lewisham Tel 020 7635 6333
Southall Tel 020 8571 6381
Southwark Tel 020 7277 4436
Sutton and Merton Tel 020 8640 5525
Wandsworth Tel 020 8947 5260

For information and advice

Contact our UK freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**
(Mon to Fri 10am to 4pm, Mon 5.30 to 7.30pm)

We can provide a translation service.

Textphone: **0808 808 3556**

Our web-based family linking service is at

www.makingcontact.org

© Contact a Family 2009
Contact a Family, 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN
Tel 020 7608 8700
Registered Charity No. 284912. Charity registered in Scotland No. SC039169
Company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales No. 1633333
HM Revenue & Customs charity tax reference No. XN54769
VAT Reg. No. GB 749 3846 82
Designed by Whatever Design Ltd

