



Preparing for adult life and transition - Northern Ireland

Information for families

Northern Ireland

Incorporating **The Lady Hoare Trust**

Introduction

Leaving school and moving into adulthood is a challenging time for all young people with disabilities and their parents. What choices exist and will they help the young person lead a fulfilling life?

Many parents feel anxious at this time, predicting poor services or a possible lack of choice for their children. The support they may have enjoyed through local parents' groups or local children's services may seem to be about to fade away.

For these reasons it is vital that parents and their children plan for transition to adult services and adult life as early as possible. This guide aims to help by bringing together some of the main issues that parents and young people need to think about. It is written for parents with children around the age of 14 as this is the age when planning for this transition process should normally begin.

Contents

Transition in Northern Ireland.....	3
Annual review of statements.....	4
The Transition Plan.....	4
Useful contacts and further information.....	7



Transition in Northern Ireland

Early teenage years are an important time for a disabled child, as the school should be working with you to start to plan your child's future educational needs as they move towards adulthood. This is called transition planning. When we surveyed parents on our database last year, most parents told us that they did not find out about their rights in time to make the most of the transition planning process.

It is vital that parents and their children plan for transition to adult services and adult life as early as possible.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**
Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

Annual review of statements

It is good practice to review all statements at least annually as part of the process of continuous assessment. The first annual review after a child's 14th birthday is particularly significant in preparation for transition to adult life and it is good practice to include a formal Transition Plan.

Annual reviews should normally be based on written reports by schools, incorporating the views of staff and, as far as possible, acknowledging parents' views, which should always be sought.

Annual Reviews from age 14 to 19

Some pupils with statements of special educational needs will remain at school after the age of 16 and Boards remain responsible for such pupils until the end of the term during which they reach 19.

The first annual review after the young person's 14th birthday should involve the agencies who will play a major role during the post-school years. The transfer of relevant information should ensure that young people receive any necessary specialist help or support during their continuing education and training after leaving school.

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The Transition Plan

It is good practice for the first annual review after the young person's 14th birthday (and any subsequent annual reviews) to include a Transition Plan, drawing together information from a range of individuals within and beyond the school in order to plan coherently for the young person's transition to adult life. The Board should seek an opinion from the HSS Trust as to whether the child is a disabled person (Section 5 of the Disabled Persons Act 1989 refers) and consult any other professionals who may have a contribution to make.

The Transition Plan should aim to address the following questions:

The school

- what are the young person's curriculum needs during transition?
- how can the curriculum help the young



person to play his or her role in the community; make use of leisure and recreational facilities; assume new roles in the family; develop new educational and vocational skills?

- what approaches should the school be making to other institutions or agencies to ensure smooth transition for the young person?

The professionals

- how can they develop close working relationships with colleagues in other agencies to ensure effective and coherent plans for the young person in transition?
- which new professionals need to be involved in planning for transition, for example occupational psychologists or therapists?
- does the young person have any special health or welfare needs requiring HSS Trust support?

- what specific independence skills need to be particularly fostered during the remaining year(s) in school?
- are assessment arrangements for transition clear, relevant and shared between all agencies concerned?
- how can information best be transferred from children's to adult services to ensure a smooth transition?
- do the arrangements for transition include appropriate training and technological support, for example in encouraging independence in travel, coping with money?
- is education after the age of 16 appropriate, and if so, at school or at a college of further education?

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Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

The family

- what do parents expect of their son's or daughter's adult life?
- what can they contribute in terms of helping their child develop personal and social skills, an adult life-style and acquire new skills?
- will parents experience new care needs and require practical help in terms of aids, adaptations or general support during these years?

The young person

- what information do young people need in order to make informed choices?
- what local arrangements exist to provide advocacy and advice if required?
- how can the young person be encouraged to contribute to his or her own Transition Plan and make positive decisions about the future?
- if the young person is living away from home or attending a residential school outside his or her own Board area, are there special issues relating to the location of services when he or she leaves school which should be discussed in planning?
- what are the young person's hopes and aspirations for the future, and how can these be met?

The Transition Plan should build on the conclusions reached and targets set at previous annual reviews, including the contributions of teachers responsible for careers education and guidance. It should focus on strengths as well as weaknesses and cover all aspects of the young person's development, allocating

clear responsibility for different aspects of development to specific agencies and professionals.

The role of the Careers Service

A representative from the Careers Service should be invited to the first annual review following the young person's 14th birthday, and all subsequent annual reviews. Their guidance should take account of information on further education and training courses, and the wishes and feelings of the young person concerned, as far as these can be ascertained. A careers officer with specialist responsibilities should oversee the young person's choice of provision, and assist the Board and school in securing it and other support such as any advice and counselling they need.

The views of young people should be sought and recorded wherever possible in any assessment, reassessment or review during the years of transition. Some young people may wish to express these views through a trusted professional, family, independent advocate or adviser, or through an officer of the Board.

Useful contacts and further information

The law dealing with Special Education in Northern Ireland is contained in the The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 as amended by The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO).

You can obtain a copy of this document by writing to:
Department of Education, 43 Balloo Road,
Bangor, County Down, BT19 7PR or
Tel: 028 9127 9939

Alternatively the document can be downloaded at <http://tinyurl.com/2y99jl>

Your local Contact a Family:

Contact a Family Northern Ireland

The Bridge Community Centre
Railway Street, Lisburn, BT28 1XP
Tel: 028 9262 7552
e-mail: nireland.office@cafamily.org.uk

Other organisations in Northern Ireland which may be able to advise on transition matters – education, training, housing, and local services:

Skill

Unit 2, Jennymount Court, North Derby Street, Belfast BT15 3HN
Tel: 028 9028 7000
e-mail: info@skillni.org.uk
Web: <http://www.skillni.org.uk>

The Skill NI Information Service is a free of charge service providing advice and information for current and perspective students, parents and/or carers, college



staff, other voluntary organisations and to anyone who has an interest in the disability and/or education sector.

Crossroads Caring for Carers - Northern Ireland

7 Regent Street, Newtownards
County Down, BT23 4AB
Tel: 028 9181 4455
e-mail: mail@crossroadscare.co.uk
Web: <http://www.crossroadscare.co.uk>

Head office for Crossroads in Northern Ireland, providing respite care for carers of people with disabilities or long term illness. It acts as a central resource for the Northern Ireland schemes which provide services in the Northern and Eastern Health and Social Services Board areas.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**
Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

Can also put carers' in touch with their nearest scheme.

The Cedar Foundation

Malcolm Sinclair House, 31 Ulsterville Avenue, Belfast, BT9 7AS
Tel: 028 9066 6188
e-mail: info@cedar-foundation.org
Web: <http://www.cedar-foundation.org/>

Services for people with physical disabilities - advice and information on education, training, employment, finding accommodation, care, respite care, transport and mobility. Also provides training and employment, an assisted living scheme providing personal assistance to people at home, an information service for parents of children with motor disabilities and cerebral palsy, and residential services.

Disability Action (Head Office)

Portside Business Park, 189 Airport Road West, Belfast, BT3 9ED
Tel : 028 9029 7880
Textphone: 028 9029 7882
e-mail : hq@disabilityaction.org
Web: <http://www.disabilityaction.org>

Works to ensure people with disabilities attain their full rights as citizens, by supporting inclusion, influencing government policy and changing attitudes. Services include information and advice, training, employment and training support, mobility centre. Also have offices in Derry, Carrickfergus and Dungannon.

Barnardo's Parenting Matters Project

453 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 3GQ
Tel: 028 9049 1081

e-mail: niparenting.matters@barnardos.org.uk
Web: <http://tinyurl.com/69mllj>

Parent support and education services for parents and carers (of children up to 18 years old). Work in areas and with groups facing disadvantage. Run by parents and carers who are trained to work with parents in groups based at community centres, schools, church halls etc.

Action Mental Health (Central Office) Mourne House

19 Knockbracken Healthcare Park Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8BH
Tel: 028 9040 3726
e-mail: info@amh.org.uk
Web: <http://www.amh.org.uk>

Assessment, guidance and training to assist people with mental health problems gain employment. Nine training units provide work programmes for people recovering from mental ill health. One Stop Information Centres provide advice on job opportunities and training for people with mental health problems. Learning disability programmes. Youth programme.

EGSA Connecting Adults with Learning

4th Floor, 40 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BA
Learners line: 0845 602 6632
Tel: 028 9024 4274
e-mail: info@egsa.org.uk
Web: <http://www.connect2learn.org.uk>

EGSA's Guidance Advisers are available at a range of venues across Northern Ireland to provide adults with information, advice and guidance on the range of learning opportunities available through

local providers and on courses to suit individual circumstances.

Gingerbread NI

169 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HR

Tel: 028 9023 1417

Helpline: 0808 808 8090

e-mail: enquiries@gingerbreadni.org

Web: www.gingerbreadni.org

Advice line for lone parents. Can help with welfare benefits, housing, employment, family and legal issues and education. Also provide face-to-face advice. Offer creche facilities, training and employment programmes, and a network of self-help groups.

Northern Ireland Deaf Youth Association

Wilton House, 5/6 College Square North
Belfast, BT1 6AR

Tel: 028 9043 8566

Textphone: 02890 236 453

Services for young deaf and hard of hearing children and young people between the ages of 5 and 30. Advice on subjects including benefits, education and training and disability. Training courses in youth leadership, counselling skills and first aid. Youth clubs, social events, activity weeks and summer schemes. Mentoring work. Campaigns to raise awareness of the general public and change attitudes to deafness.

Northern Ireland Youth Forum

24a Ann Street, Wilson Court
Belfast, BT1 4EF

Tel: 028 9033 1990

e-mail: info@niyf.org

Web: <http://www.niyf.org>

Youth led organisation run by and representing the interests of young people aged 14-25. Youth rights and citizenship unit, equality unit, youth policy unit and international unit. Access to the internet and training services. Information, advice and signposting on most areas of concern to young people.

RNIB Northern Ireland

40 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BA

Tel: 028 9032 9373

e-mail: mibni@rnib.org.uk

Web: <http://www.rnib.org.uk>

Resource centre and telephone advice for people with serious sight loss. Information and advice on daily living, benefits, employment, education and training. ICT training. Fully equipped resource centre. Offices in Londonderry also.

RNID - Northern Ireland

Wilton House, 5 College Square North
Belfast, BT1 6AR

Tel/ textphone: 028 9023 9619

e-mail: information.nireland@rnid.org.uk

Web: <http://www.rnid.org.uk>

Information for deaf people. Communication support, information and help with choosing and using aids and adaptations. Training (including deaf awareness training). Services for deaf people with special needs. Charges for training, communication support, aids and equipment.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**
Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

Extern

Hydepark House, 54 Mallusk Road
Newtownabbey, BT36 4WU
Tel: 028 9084 0555
e-mail: info@extern.org
Web: <http://www.extern.org>

Services for children and young people at risk of being taken into care, custody, or school exclusion. Adult services for homeless people, ex-offenders, people with addiction problems, mental health problems, experiencing family breakdown and poverty. Mentoring scheme. Services for community groups, training.

Housing Rights Service

Middleton Buildings, 10-12 High Street
Belfast, BT1 2BA
Tel: 028 9024 5640
Web: <http://www.housingrights.org.uk>
Web: <http://www.housingadviceni.org>

Advice and representation service for people with housing problems - homelessness, rent arrears, mortgage arrears, tenancy problems, harassment, illegal eviction, threatened court action. Provide specialist training and information to assist other advisors/practitioners.

Children's Law Centre - Northern Ireland

3rd Floor, Philip House, 123-137 York Street, Belfast, BT15 1AB
Tel: 028 9024 5704
Advice line: 0808 808 5678
e-mail: info@childrenslawcentre.org
Web: <http://www.childrenslawcentre.org>

Advice and telephone helpline for children, young people, parents, carers and professionals on all aspects of law

and policy affecting children and young people. Provides information, legal advice, research and training on children's rights. Freepost advice write to: Chalky Freepost, BEL 3837, Belfast BT15 1BR.

Law Centre (NI)

124 Donegall Street, Belfast
BT1 2GY
Tel: 028 9024 4401
Textphone: 028 9023 6340
e-mail: admin.belfast@lawcentreni.org
Web: <http://www.lawcentreni.org>

Legal advice and information for people on low incomes referred by other agencies. Deal with social security, employment, immigration and community care. Representation at tribunals and court. Advice line and publications. Training and consultancy service for advisers in member advice agencies, CABx, voluntary and statutory organisations.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive - Belfast Homeless Advice Centre

32-36 Great Victoria Street, Belfast
BT2 7BA
Tel: 028 9031 7000
e-mail: info@nihe.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.nihe.gov.uk>
Out of hours emergencies: 028 9024 6111

Assessment of priority need under the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988. Can provide temporary accommodation for those assessed as in priority need - those with children or pregnant, vulnerable because of age (60+), disability or at risk from violence. General housing advice and information to private and council tenants, and homeless people.



Rethink - Northern Ireland

Wyndhurst, Knockbracken Health Care Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8BH

Tel: 028 9040 2323

e-mail: info.nireland@rethink.org

Web: <http://www.rethink.org>

Range of services for people with severe mental illness, their families and carers. Flexible day care centres, supported accommodation. Information and advice, training and employment, advocacy, respite care, domiciliary care schemes. Carers support groups, user-led Voices forum. Phone the office for details of services and locations.

Shelter Northern Ireland

58 Howard Street, Belfast, BT1 6PJ

Tel: 028 9024 7752

e-mail: shelterni@btconnect.com

Web: <http://tinyurl.com/6px5dy>

Advice and information on housing and homelessness for people in housing need. Also campaign on homelessness issues.

Simon Community Telephone Helpline

247 Cavehill Road, Belfast, BT15 5BS

Tel: 028 9071 7715

They work with the Health and Social Services Trusts to provide accommodation for young people leaving care to assist some of the most vulnerable people at this early age. Advice about housing, homelessness, finding accommodation. Advice particularly on social services responsibility in relation to the Children's Order and assessment as a child in need. Also advice for carers and professionals working with young people.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Equality House, 7 - 9 Shaftesbury Square Belfast, BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 9089 0890

e-mail: information@equalityni.org

Web: <http://www.equalityni.org>

Information, advice and assistance on complaints relating to discrimination, harassment or equality on sex, race, disability, religious belief, political opinion and sexual orientation. Information and education on equalities issues. Oversees the public sector's duty to promote equality of opportunity. Responsible for reviewing equality legislation. Publications, guidance material and research.

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**

Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

Mencap Northern Ireland

Segal House, 4 Annadale Avenue

Belfast, BT7 3JH

Tel: 028 9069 1351

Helpline: 0845 763 6227

e-mail: mencapni@mencap.org.uk

Web: www.mencap.org.uk

Helpline, information, support and a range of services for children and adults with a learning disability, with a focus on building skills to enable independent living as far as possible. Services include information and advocacy services, family support services, children's services, employment projects and residential support.

Positive Futures

Head Office, 2b Park Drive, Bangor

Co.Down, BT20 4JZ

Tel: 028 9147 5720

e-mail: info@positive-futures.net

Web: <http://www.positive-futures.net>

Community based services for children, young people and adults with learning difficulties in Northern Ireland. Residential and supported living services, day care, long and short term respite care and family based adult placement services.

Society of St Vincent de Paul - Northern Regional Office

196-200 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2AJ

Tel: 028 9035 1561

e-mail: info@svpni.co.uk

Web: <http://www.svp-ni.org>

Support and assistance for people in need. Home, hospital and prison visiting. Drop-in centres. Home management and personal development courses. Pre and after school playgroups. Distribute

cookers and washing machines. Advice on benefits, homelessness, money and debt.

Citizens Advice Northern Ireland

Regional Office, 46 Donegall Pass,

Belfast, BT7 1BS

Tel: 028 9023 1120

e-mail: info@citizensadvice.co.uk

Web: <http://www.citizensadvice.co.uk>

Northern Ireland office for the network of Citizens Advice Bureaux, which provide advice and information for the general public on a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing rights, money and debt. NIACAB provides support and training for the local CABx and information about local bureaux.

Carers Northern Ireland

58 Howard Street, Belfast BT1 6PJ

Tel: 028 9043 9843

e-mail: info@carersni.org

Web: <http://www.carersni.org>

Information service for carers. Deal with a range of issues including benefits, community care and respite care. Facilitate carers groups and campaign on behalf of carers.

Contact a Family is now on Facebook, MySpace, Bebo and has an office in Second Life.

Join us at:

MySpace

www.myspace.com/contactafamily

Bebo

www.bebo.com/contactafamily

Facebook

www.facebook.com

and search for 'Contact a Family'

Second Life

You can find our Contact a Family virtual advice office in Second Life on Aloft Island 19.40.22 (PG) or visit <http://tiny.cc/P9A5l> to teleport there directly

Freephone helpline: **0808 808 3555**
Web: **www.cafamily.org.uk**

Getting in contact with us

Free helpline for parents and families

0808 808 3555

Textphone

0808 808 3556

Open Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm;

Mon, 5.30–7.30pm

Access to over 100 languages

www.cafamily.org.uk
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**

Web **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

- A guide to claiming Disability Living Allowance for your disabled child (UK)
- Benefits, tax credits and other financial assistance (UK)
- The tax credits guide (UK)
- Working (UK)
- Fathers (UK)
- Relationships (UK)
- Siblings (UK)
- Grandparents (UK)
- Money when your child reaches 16 years of age (UK)

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London EC1V 1JN
Registered Charity Number: 284912
Charity registered in Scotland No. SC039169
Company limited by guarantee
Registered in England and Wales No. 1633333
VAT Registration No. GB 749 3846 82

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