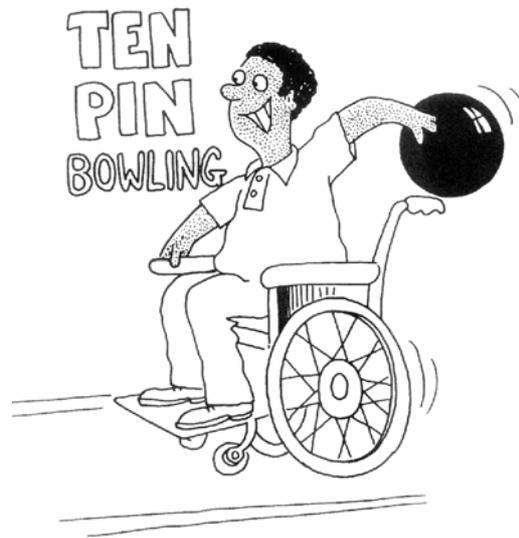


contact a family
for families with disabled children

Everybody here?

Play and leisure for disabled children and young people



A Contact a Family survey of families' experiences in the UK

June 2002

Pauline Shelley

ISBN: 1 874715 38 6

**Contact a Family
209-211 City Road
London EC1V 1JN**

Contents

I Introduction

1. Background
2. Method

II Barriers to Access

1. Getting started
2. Local mainstream leisure amenities
3. Local clubs for children and young people
4. Big attractions

III Overcoming Barriers

1. What parents said would most help
2. Positive action by parents and young people

IV Conclusions

1. Is everybody here?
2. More evidence from research
3. Rights to play and leisure
4. Recommendations

Appendices

1. References and useful organisations
2. List of big attractions and good days out recommended by parents
3. Survey form

The views and suggestions in this report are those of individual contributors, in their own words, and are not necessarily supported by Contact a Family. Contact a Family cannot accept responsibility for any activities or services mentioned in this report.

I INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Most disabled children and young people are just like everyone else. They want to have friends, enjoy their favourite activities, have a break from their parents and visit new and interesting places. Like other children, their interests range from swimming and sport, to drama, arts and crafts, going to parks and playgrounds, cinemas, bowling alleys, museums and just hanging out with friends or going to a local club.

Indeed, Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises *“the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts”*.

Contact a Family is a UK-wide voluntary organisation providing information to families caring for children with disabilities and special needs. We know from parents' calls to our free helpline, that opportunities for play and leisure are very limited for disabled children. Contact a Family therefore decided to find out from parents of disabled children what the problems were and what would enable their children and young people to use local leisure facilities.

Every year in June, Contact a Family participates and plans with other carers' organisations a special Carers' Week, to celebrate carers' contributions and raise important issues. The theme in 2002 is “carers in our communities”. We timed our leisure survey for Carers Week because local recreation is such a vital part of being a member of one's local community

We put a questionnaire on our website for four months from January to April, 2002 and sent out postal versions on request from parents.

The survey covered three main areas of leisure provision:

1. local mainstream facilities such as swimming pools and cinemas
2. local after school and holiday clubs
3. major attractions

The resulting statistics and the hundreds of e-mails and messages we received from parents all over the UK provide a snapshot of their experiences. They reveal the shocking extent of their children's exclusion from ordinary leisure opportunities and their families' resulting isolation from a world that most of us take for granted.

We thank parent carers for all their comments and responses to our survey. They put forward many suggestions about how services could improve and suggested lots of ideas for good days out with a disabled child and family. These are all included in this report along with the findings and our recommendations based on what the parents have said.

2. Method

1,085 UK parents completed the survey forms, 670 on the Contact a Family website and 415 by post. The website response rate, of those looking at the survey, was 40%. It is more difficult to estimate the postal response rate because an unknown number of postal forms were copied and distributed by some local groups and professionals with a particular interest in the subject.

In addition to completing the questionnaire, a third of the parents also sent e-mails and forms with comments and, such was their strength of feeling, over 200 offered to speak to the media!

The respondents

The parents' children had a mix of ages. Just under half were of primary school age.

Ages of children

Under 5	164	(15%)
5 -11years	521	(48%)
12-19 years	349	(32%)
Not stated	51	(5%)
Total	1,085	

They ranged across all disabilities and special needs. Most children had more than one disability. 72% of the sample had learning disabilities and 62% had communication difficulties.

Disabilities

Learning	787
Communication	672
Physical	495
Medical	371
Multiple	260
Sensory	291

They lived all over the UK:

England	819	(76%)
Wales	126	(12%)
Scotland	92	(8%)
N. Ireland	28	(2%)
Not given	20	(2%)
Total	1,085	

II BARRIERS TO ACCESS

1. Getting started

A large number of the parents were apprehensive about even trying to get their children out and about because of the range of difficulties they were likely to encounter.

73% were daunted by long queues

68% said that they were put off by being made to feel uncomfortable

55% had to travel out of their local area to find suitable facilities

46% were limited by restricted budgets for spending on leisure

24% lacked transport to get there

This is what parents said in their e-mails and on forms:

Queuing

73% of parents decide not to go on outings because their child cannot cope with long queues.

Those whose children had communication difficulties (including autism) were the most put off by queues (75%)

“The possibility to go to the head of the queue at Chessington and Legoland is much valued – we could not manage without it.”

“Even on queue jumping schemes one has to undergo abuse and hurtful comments from the public which spoil the day for all.”

Feeling uncomfortable

68% said that they do not use leisure facilities because their family or child is made to feel uncomfortable.

Those whose children had multiple disabilities felt slightly more uncomfortable (69%).

“There are no pictures ever of anyone with a disability so that anyone who reveals a non-standard issue body in their swimsuit gets stared at... the public need to be educated...”

“Our son has severe learning difficulties with no communication and inappropriate behaviour. We are prevented from using facilities because other people do not accept our son’s reactions...”

Lack of suitable local facilities

55% of the parents said that they had to travel out of the local area to find accessible leisure facilities.

“I live in a very large town with two leisure centres and there is very little set up for children with special needs; I am battling with my local borough for some sort of facilities...”

“Unfortunately in my area, children with special needs apparently do not exist after school, on weekends or in holidays. This would be the only explanation for the total lack of provision.”

“My son has Down’s Syndrome and we travel 25 miles for him to attend a weekly football training session for special needs...”

Restricted budgets

46% said that their budget limited their outings

Those with medical conditions were most restricted by budgets (50%)

Lack of transport

25% said that they could not take their children to activities because of lack of transport.

The numbers were equal across all disabilities.

“Public transport is a nightmare, not to mention expensive.”

“Attempting to travel by train is a real nightmare, getting him on and off trains, flights of stairs and having to leave the wheelchair in the guards van and carry our 12 year old for the journey (no discount).”

“I had to stop taking my son to school club once a week as it cost me too much money in a taxi to collect him. I want him to have a normal life, I feel his childhood is slipping away...”

2. Local mainstream leisure facilities

We asked parents what they thought of specific local facilities. Table 1 below shows these in order of use.

Table 1: Local facilities used by disabled children

Local facility	Percentage of use
Swimming pool	75%
Cinema	52%
Playground	52%
Park	49%
Theatre	42%
Bowling Alley	38%
Museum	28%
Football match	19%

However, the amount of use did not bear resemblance to how disabled-friendly they are.

We asked parents to rank these facilities according to criteria which would make the facility inclusive. Table 2 shows that often the most used were the worst.

Table 2: How inclusive were they?

	Best	Worst
Concessions for carer/child	None	Cinema
Disabled parking	Bowling Alleys	Playgrounds (PG)
Disabled toilets	Bowling Alleys	Parks & PGs
Disabled changing facilities	Swimming Pools	Parks & PGs
Physical access	Bowling Alleys	Museums
Helpful staff	Bowling alleys	Parks & PGs

The problems with the facilities

Parents explained the problems with these facilities in their e-mails and postal forms.

i) Concessions

Table 3: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	25	20	21	26	27	28	N/A	N/A
Poor/very poor	46	58	51	44	52	47	N/A	N/A

Best = none

Worst = cinemas

Parents said:

“There needs to be a way to tell staff and ask for discounted entry at leisure outlets in a discreet way, especially if the disabilities are not obvious.”

“We go out mainly for our other son and we feel that it is very unfair that we have to pay for our disabled son, as he gets very little out of it, but we have to take him or split the family up for the day...could the government look at funding families to take grandparents along or aunts or uncles to help out...”

ii) Disabled parking

Table 4: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	32	31	18	15	35	19	12	18
Poor/very poor	32	41	60	57	30	46	58	55

Best = bowling alleys

Worst = playgrounds

Parents said:

"I find the worst problem is the public. One day we had a really nasty note put on our car window for parking in a disabled bay."

"We notice that often disabled car parking spaces are taken by cars not displaying badges.."

"A major difficulty is selfishness of people who park over pavement ramps and in disabled bays at supermarkets, leisure complexes etc."

"Perhaps if they put up signs saying that non-disabled drivers would be wheel clamped?"

iii) Accessible toilets

Table 5: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	26	27	18	16	28	18	8	7
Poor/very poor	36	41	45	46	36	52	81	79

Best = bowling alleys

Worst = parks and playgrounds

Accessible toilets are a major problem for parents caring for physically disabled children who use wheelchairs. As one parent said, *"how can anyone go on an outing and manage all day without going to the toilet?"*

Just nine parents said that the disabled toilets in their playgrounds were excellent compared to 296 who said they were very poor.

Another parent wrote:

“My child is 13 and still in nappies; she had pooped, I found a disabled toilet but it was locked, no mention of where to get a key. I ended up walking to a park close by to lay my child on the grass to change her, hoping no one could see what mess my child had made.”

iv) Disabled changing facilities

Many of the comments we received about toilets related to changing facilities for older children in nappies.

Table 6: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	20	9	8	7	15	9	5	5
Poor/very poor	45	69	70	64	54	61	85	85

Best = swimming pools

Worst = parks and playgrounds

For example, only three parents had found an excellent changing room in their local park compared to 209 who thought they were poor or very poor. Their emails and messages explain why:

“Please note that the main reason that carers of profoundly disabled children are unable to take their child/young person out is because of no suitable changing facilities in toilets anywhere.”

“All disabled toilets in our surrounding area do not have an area where you can change a six year old. I am told that there are not enough disabled children (in Norwich) to warrant the need for a special toilet for them. I am often taken to the disabled toilets and told to change her on the floor.”

“My son is doubly incontinent and unable to sit on a toilet, he is too big for the baby changing mat and also deserves some dignity and should not have to be changed in the back of our car, Would you like to lie on a public toilet floor to have your personal hygiene taken care of?”

“My seven year old daughter is in nappies and the only solution is to lay her on the floor of the disabled toilet. I hate having to put her onto the floor of a public toilet.”

GOOD PRACTICE

The Rochdale Parent's Forum met with Leisure Service Managers about the poor facilities at two swimming pools in Rochdale. New changing tables have recently been installed at both pools (see page 22 for details of further improvements).

v) Physical access

Table 7: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	33	39	23	22	41	23	23	28
Poor/very poor	27	29	38	43	23	33	39	31

Best = bowling alleys

Worst = museums

We wondered if physical access would be as big a problem for families given that legislation dictates that all new public buildings at least should be accessible to wheelchair users.

However, there were also significant problems:

"We cannot access the local cinema because it has no lift or access for wheelchair users so instead of travelling 5 miles to a cinema we have to travel at least 20 miles. This also excluded my daughter from birthday parties she is invited to."

"We have a three wheeler for country walks but stiles and kissing gates are a huge problem!"

"Although cinemas and sporting events might have access the accessible seating often segregates you from friends and other supporters."

"Our local swimming pool provides a disabled changing room which involves negotiating six manual doors and a warren of thin corridors. I have commented but no action as yet..."

GOOD PRACTICE

London Borough of Harrow– inclusive playgrounds

Harrow Council has provided an accessible play area at the Harrow Recreation ground. It has special swings in the playground that can be used by disabled children and a new wheelchair-friendly roundabout adapted especially for wheelchairs in playground. The Council has also agreed to provide an adapted see-saw. The aim is to make the play areas equally usable for all children.

The Council have agreed that Ruislip Lido can also have one of these roundabouts in their hard standing play area and to improve wheelchair access to the sand and to the picnic areas. There is also a restaurant pub with a play area overlooking the Lido and indoor lay area with ball pool and climbing equipment.

The Harrow Council Parks Department has worked with the Sunday Special Club (a parents' support group) and the Harrow Recreation Ground Users Association to achieve this inclusion. Information from: the Sunday Special Club linmcarroll@aol.com or telephone 020 8868 1942.

vi) Staff attitudes

Table 8: Percentage of responses

	Swimming Pool	Cinema	Theatre	Museum	Bowling Alley	Football Matches	Playground	Park
Good/excellent	23	27	34	30	35	35	20	17
Poor/very poor	32	32	25	27	28	36	52	50

Best = Bowling alleys with theatres a close second

Worst = Parks and playgrounds

There were very few e-mails explicitly on the subject of staff attitudes but in fact almost all of the comments above are an implicit criticism of staff attitudes, rigid thinking and ignorance. This is illustrated in the parents' comments below in relation to swimming pools.

"Attempts to attend mainstream swimming sessions always end in disaster with the staff drawing attention to my son's 'bad behaviour'"

"I am the mum of twin boys aged 10 years with epilepsy and behaviour problems. They were refused entry into a swimming pool without a letter from their doctor even though they were to be supervised by two adults..."

“I have not been able to find my child swimming lessons – he needs one-to-one and our local pool is very unsympathetic.”

“The only local facility my son loves is swimming and he attended the local pool with his mainstream school three times a week until 18 months ago when they decided they could not take him anymore; we have campaigned but there has been total lack of interest by the leisure people. My son has Cerebral palsy and is quite physically disabled.”

“My son is 11 with severe learning difficulties... He is mobile with no speech. He loves swimming and I would love him to have swimming lessons but this is not catered for.”

“When the carer has taken my child swimming she has been unable to stay with him while changing due to his age. He has to go into the male changing rooms alone.”

GOOD PRACTICE

Teddington Pool, London Borough of Richmond

Teddington Pool provides lessons especially for children with special needs. Most teaching is done on a one to one basis and all kinds of disabilities are catered for. The aim is to enable children to be safe in water so they and their families get more out of holidays and swimming. Large cubicles have been installed for easy changing. The scheme began with the enthusiasm of one teacher who has now trained several colleagues to work with disabled children. As a result there is rarely a waiting list for these lessons.

Information from: Wendy Dorgan, 020 8943 0796

3. Local clubs for children and young people

757 parents (80%) said that their children could not go to local clubs.

They were asked to tick which barriers prevented their child from joining clubs.

The barriers were physical or were to do with being unable to accommodate special needs, whatever they might be – for example unusual behaviour.

Table 9: Reasons for not joining local clubs

Special needs not met	66%
Special needs club would be better	52%
Lack of information on clubs	27%
Wrong age group	22%
Lack of transport to get there	15%
Inaccessible	15%
Costs of using club	10%
Distance from home too far	9%

Specialist provision was far more of an issue than cost, transport or distance.

Parents said that clubs present them and their disabled children with dilemmas and difficulties. While many parents want children and young people to be able to go to mainstream clubs, others feel, albeit reluctantly, that their children need specialist provision.

“I have been trying to find Saturday activities for him. There is nothing at all for special needs except one drama group especially for children with Down’s Syndrome. I want to weep when I look at all the lists of riding/swimming/drama clubs open to other children all of which he would enjoy. Normal clubs don’t have enough staff to cater for his needs.”

“My daughter prefers art and craft type things but there is nothing available in our borough.”

“My child needs a club for deaf children twice to three times per week. She is alienated because of cultural reasons and because of safety supervision.”

Joining local clubs was a problem regardless of the disability. Those with medical conditions have slightly higher access to local clubs while only 11% of multi-disabled children have access to clubs.

GOOD PRACTICE

Thumbs Up After School Club, Lewes, East Sussex

This after-school club includes children with all disabilities, aged 9-11. Staff find ways to help children join in activities regardless of their disability and help other children understand about challenging behaviour.

Parents pointed out extra problems for some children and young people:

Some additional barriers

- i) Children who have severe physical disabilities and no learning difficulties.

“The problem is that mainstream children laugh at my child and put him off. He is intelligent and able physically but has speech and language problems so cannot explain or understand straight away. He understands what people say and do but the mainstream children and adults don’t realise this. “

- ii) Children who are excluded because of their chronological age but need the protective atmosphere provided for much younger children.

“Our little boy, aged 9 years, will not be allowed into the soft play area when he is 10 – for all that he has the mental age of 5.”

- iii) Children who are placed at school out of county or borough and lack local contacts.

“My child attends a special school which is in another Local Authority area and most of the after school clubs are for only people living within that area.”

GOOD PRACTICE

Bolton Inclusive Play Care Model - Inclusive Playcare Opportunities

Bolton Play and Children Services in partnership with Bolton Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) have developed a model of Inclusive Play Care for children with complex needs have access to out of school child care.

This model which was developed by Jacqueline Winstanley was highlighted in a recent best value inspection as an example of good practice and as an initiative which could transform the lives of many children in Bolton

The model encourages the development of Inclusive settings where children are seen as children first and if and when they need help to participate in the activities. The settings work in partnership with Parents/carers and other agencies to enable them to achieve the level of participation that they are able or wish to have.

The model was piloted over the Summer holidays 2001 and has evidenced a turnaround in working practice and increased the quality and availability of playcare opportunities for children of all abilities.

In particular in one of the settings "Kidzone at The Den" a child with multiple impairments was able to access four weeks of Holiday Care as a direct result of the success of the model, an intimate care package and a 1-1 worker was provided funded by the Carers grant, the occupational therapy loan scheme provided a portable ramp, Play and Children's Services provided ongoing support and guidance through the SEN/Disability & Inclusion Officer.

The child has continued to access the setting directly beyond the length of the pilot.

It is envisaged that the model will be adopted in settings across the Borough thus opening up the opportunity to access local inclusive playcare opportunities which meet the needs of children and their families.

Information from: Jacqueline.Winstanley@bolton.gov.uk

Youth clubs

Many parents feel that once children reach 12 years of age, the situation becomes more difficult as teenagers express a desire to be more independent of their parents.

Some parents also wrote about teenage children who are away at residential school during the week and are excluded even more from local activities during weekends and holidays.

Based on our sample of 349 young people aged 12-19

- 102 (30%) can attend a club
- 238 (70%) cannot attend a club

Later in the survey (see page 22) we asked parents to rank what they would find most helpful.

Taken as a percentage of 12-19s only, “more activities for teenagers” headed the list. 250 parents (72%) ticked this box.

“Once a child reaches 11 or 12 there is nothing in my area that gives my child a chance to mix socially. My child was barred from a holiday scheme near my place of work because he did not live in the area and despite it being in the same county!”

“It is harder to find activities over the age of 12 – her isolation isolates us as a family.”

“My son enjoyed being a cub but being a scout was too hard for him because of his learning difficulties.”

“I have two teenage boys with Asperger Syndrome and they need sensitive support to access a group and it's not available. They are short of friends.”

“There is nothing for my 15 year old son with autism on weekends in Newcastle”

“There are no clubs, bowling, cinemas or pools for my fifteen year old daughter. She has no social life.”

“There are few activities for teenagers in wheelchairs. Many can't do sport. They should not be grouped with same aged children with learning disabilities.”

There were many, many messages from parents along the same lines as these.

A Guide leader, who is also a parent, wrote about how she had tried to develop disability awareness training to Guide organisers in London but had had to cancel it “because our volunteers felt that they had other training priorities.”

GOOD PRACTICE

Young Disabled People's Project

Based at Disability North in Newcastle, this grant-funded project provides a programme of activities including swimming, trampolining, basketball, five a side, bowling skills development and friendship. It is open to youngsters in Newcastle and Tyne and Wear.

More information from: lisa.thomas@disabilitynorth

4. Big attractions

We asked parents if they had travelled further afield to visit the big leisure attractions. Table 10 shows what they thought of these.

Table 10: Families' opinions of big leisure attractions

	No of families who have visited attraction	Opinion				
		Very poor	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent
Alton Towers	215	14	20	65	66	48
Chessington	198	14	24	60	79	22
Legoland	308	12	16	67	115	98
London Eye	121	4	8	25	50	34
Blackpool Pleasure Beach	244	25	46	96	52	25
Camelot	97	9	13	42	24	9
Lightwater Valley	71	3	7	4	23	4
Odessa Arena	13	1	1	1	3	7
Techniquest	69	1	7	16	27	18
Edinburgh Zoo	91	3	15	27	30	16

(please note that the figures given are the number of families with that opinion, not a percentage)

Taking “excellent” and “good” combined as a satisfaction rating, the order of satisfactions was

Odyssey Arena, Belfast	77% *
Legoland, Windsor	69%
London Eye	68%
Techniquest, Cardiff	67%
Alton Towers	54%
Chessington	51%
Edinburgh Zoo	50%
Lightwater	38%
Camelot	34%
Blackpool	32%

**Please note, only 13 families had visited Odyssey Arena.*

Parents also emailed and wrote in with many other suggestions for attractions to visit or good days out and these are listed in Appendix 2.

GOOD PRACTICE

Disneyland Paris

A dad writes:

“I can heartily recommend Disneyland Paris for children with physical and learning disabilities. There is a disabled pass allowing immediate access to rides, there are special boats to allow wheelchair access and they will happily stop rides to allow non-mobile guests to board. The staff will go to any lengths to ensure that the child and carer has a good holiday. When my son had an upset tummy they arranged a free taxi back to the hotel. They also provide ground floor accommodation if required and most importantly, you are made to feel at ease and that this service is just part of their normal service and you do not feel a nuisance, A wonderful to place to go if you have a disability.”

III OVERCOMING BARRIERS

1. What parents said would help

Parents were given a list of 12 criteria which might help overcome barriers and asked to tick up to six of these.

This produced the following order of priority:

Table 11: What parents said would help

Criteria	Nos.	%
1. Staff trained to be helpful	696	64%
2. One to one help in large groups	638	59%
3. Holiday clubs	631	58%
4. Information on what's available	628	58%
5. Include siblings	520	48%
6. After school clubs	511	47%
7. Reduced fees	507	47%
8. Help to cope in a large group	496	46%
9. A greater range of times & places	481	44%
10. A companion to go with my child	469	43%
11. Supervised transport	299	28%
12. Sensitivity to my culture	50	5%
13. More activities for teenagers - taken as a percentage of 12-19s only	250	72%

Leaving aside the needs of teenagers, trained staff stands out as being what would help most. This is followed by one to one help in large groups. This reinforces the serious concerns about lack of training.

Parents made lots of comments on what would help.

On staff:

"I think that out of school clubs need more training for staff so they can understand children's behaviour. The children would feel more confident if understood and it would help other children understand as well."

On help in large groups:

"I would like a slot when only a few children with disabilities use the swimming pool because my child is terrified of the echoey acoustics when the pool is full of people."

On one to one support:

“We could do with holiday clubs that include trampolining and ice-skating which my son is excellent at. Exciting physical play keeps him happy and him relaxed but they are not available because there is no one to one support for him.”

On information

“A guide on special needs attractions around the UK would be most helpful”

GOOD PRACTICE

Sport Cheshire

Sport Cheshire has published a Sports and Facility Directory for disabled children and adults. It includes information on disability access to amenities in Cheshire, many sports options suitable for special needs, coaching, youth games.

More information from: Neil@sportcheshire.org

Including siblings

“It’s very difficult to find after-school activities as my son needs support and I have two others. Activities which include siblings would be ideal – we have to travel to another area to find something that is suitable for all three.”

On after school clubs

“What about drama and music workshops, something creative instead of the normal after school clubs? All children love music.”

On reduced fees

“It would be great to have a local guide to facilities which give concessions to carers.”

“Attractions should give concessions because we have to go early, can only access part of the park or stay a short time and see only part of the production.”

GOOD PRACTICE

Leicester City Council - concessions

This Council provides a provides a Leisure Pass which entitles carers on benefits (including Invalid Carers Allowance) up to 50% concession for activities provided by leisure centres. It also entitles them to concessions from other organisations such as schools, restaurants and hairdressers.

Available from local libraries and leisure centres in Leicester City.

On holidays

“Could the government find funding for grandparents, aunts and uncles to accompany us on holidays to help out?”

On a companion to go with my child:

“A network of buddies would be a wonderful idea.”

“My son attends mainstream school, but needs a companion to support him in mainstream after school activities.”

GOOD PRACTICE**Birmingham Children’s Fund**

This Children’s Fund has decided to increase accessibility of play and leisure services by funding a voluntary organisation to recruit, train and develop a team of Inclusion Access Workers who will empower disabled children aged 5-13 to access a range of leisure and play activities. The workers will provide specialist advice and hands on support whenever the child and family needs it and liaise with networks across Birmingham to promote good practice. They will also provide training and advice to staff who work in a range of leisure and play settings in the voluntary, statutory and private sectors in the city.

Information from Ted Eames, Operational Manager, Birmingham Children’s Fund, telephone 0121 214 2020; email mdbcfu@mail.nch.org.uk

On teenagers

“As my daughter gets older, she prefers someone other than me to go with her.”

“A befriending service to help teenagers be able to go to mainstream activities without parents.”

Other suggestions included:

- Gates not styles on country walks
- Special Needs Passes which parent carers could use at attractions to avoid queuing
- Volunteers such as sixth formers and college students to act as companions on outings
- Trolleys in supermarkets and shops that are suitable for use with junior wheelchairs

GOOD PRACTICE

Glasgow City Council

Glasgow Council for Voluntary Service conducted a major survey of leisure opportunities for disabled children in Glasgow (the Healthy hobbies Project).

As a result, the Cultural and Leisure Services Department (CLS) have begun a rolling programme from 2002, of training and support to the eight local Community Action Teams across the city to strengthen their knowledge and awareness of how to work with and communicate with children and adults with varying disabilities.

Information about the Healthy Hobbies Report is available from Glasgow CVS, telephone no: 0141 332 2444.

2. Positive action by parents and young people

On a positive note, parents wrote in with many examples of what they had done to improve leisure access and choices for their children. Here are some examples.

Successes with local councils

- A group of parents in Malden got together with the Malden Council Sports Development officer and formed the Malden Disability Sports Forum; it now provides trampolining, swimming and football for children with special needs and their siblings.
- Following a meeting between the Rochdale Parents Forum and Leisure Services Managers promised improvements to two swimming pools (including special needs swimming lessons) have recently been implemented, including new changing tables and disabled changing areas (with central lockers).
- The Rayners Lane Baptist Church Sunday Club for disabled and able-bodied children, worked with Harrow Council and the Harrow Recreation Ground Users Association to create a unique accessible play area. (see Harrow Council page 11 for details.)
- A mother in Leicester is working with Leicester City Council Planning Officers to provide a fully accessible play ground in a central Leicester City Park.

Setting up new special play schemes and clubs

- Parents in Somerset started the ESCAPE Support group in 2000 to provide activities and days out for the whole family in Somerset.
- Three parents in St. Neots have started a group called Little Stars for pre-school children. They meet weekly at two different venues, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The parents (including some disabled parents) have a chance to meet while the children play.
- A mother and father have set up the GLAD Activity Group for 4-12 year olds in Blackburn, providing weekly activities club for disabled children and their siblings.

There are many other examples on the Contact a Family database of local groups started and run by parents who provide major life-line play and leisure activities for children in their communities.

Action by young people:

Youth Plus in Essex

- Youth Plus was founded by a sixteen year old to overcome his isolation after he left special school. Working with his sister, then aged fourteen, plus two friends, they produced a calendar of activities that they would like to attend within the community. Two years later the group of young people, half of whom are disabled, has 70 members. They meet weekly and are able to attend mainstream activities locally. They have a great social life and do things like basketball, badminton, jazz dance, art and computers. Some members are learning to sign. The calendar can be seen on the website and more young people are welcome to join in. See www.youth-plus.org.uk for more information or telephone 01277 365448.

IV CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusions

Is everybody here?

The answer is clearly no.

The Contact a Family survey provides a snapshot of families' experiences, all pointing to a high degree of social exclusion of disabled children and young people. Why is this?

Firstly, families face many barriers and it is not surprising that they do not even attempt to use many leisure services. Parents said how put off they were by public attitudes and by practicalities such as long queues and inaccessible transport. For example 79% had never been to a football match, 72% had not visited museums and 62% had not been to bowling alleys – even though these amenities were more likely to be accessible and welcoming.

Secondly, when families did try to use leisure services they often encountered rigid rules and obstacles.

The main reason for this in most cases is the attitude of providers and staff at all levels. This is true for all disabilities, physical, learning and sensory.

Physical barriers

Physically disabled children and young people are clearly dependent upon basic physical access. Their parents or carers need allocated disabled parking spaces. Children have to be able to get into the building, park or play space – hence the need for:

- ramps
- doors which they can open
- large cubicles for wheelchairs
- accessible toilets
- changing areas for older children needing intimate care
- low sinks
- play equipment which can include wheelchairs.

Almost all scores in our survey ranked physical barriers as being dissatisfactory (poor, very poor) rather than satisfactory (good, excellent).

The worst problem of all is the lack of changing facilities for older children who wear incontinence pads. Many parents highlighted this as a major problem and said that even the best amenities scored badly here. For example, bowling alleys had the highest satisfaction score amongst their users and they still only scored 28% on toilets. Many parents said that changing facilities are non-existent and mentioned the need for a national campaign.

Accessible toilets were almost as bad. As one parent said, *“how can anyone go out for the day and not use a toilet?”*

Attitudinal barriers

Many of the children had learning and no physical disabilities. However, they face other hurdles. Children and young people with Autism and Asperger Syndrome, for example, can find long queues and large crowds intolerable. Many children with learning difficulties long to play sport and join clubs but are excluded because of their unusual behaviour or need for extra support.

Yet the example given of Teddington Pool (page 12) – which teaches children with severe learning and physical disabilities - shows that these children can be taught individually and then integrated into the mainstream pools and activities. During the survey, parents phoned Contact a Family to describe what helps and some mentioned the value of low cost and effective volunteer buddy schemes which helped their young person join mainstream clubs.

We asked parents to choose the six issues, out of a list of twelve, that would most enable their child to enjoy leisure activities with their peers. The highest scoring item was “staff trained to help my child”. Almost two thirds of the parents identified this need.

Staff attitudes are linked to other issues most picked by parents. These included:

- Help for children who find large groups difficult
- Clear information on what is available
- Activities which include siblings
- A greater variety of activities to suit different interests

Social isolation and segregation

Given all these barriers, it is not surprising that 52% of parents felt that their children would be better off in special clubs or a separate provision where staff are trained to cater specifically for their children.

It is clear from our survey that families need choices if their children are to enjoy the same leisure opportunities as other children. They achieve equity of access if they can use both specialist and mainstream services.

Extra resources are needed. However, it is a basic human right, “to engage in play and recreational activities” (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). Furthermore, The Children Act makes it clear that is the duty of local authorities is to minimise the effect of children’s impairments so that they can participate in society on equal terms.

2. More evidence from research

What sort of life do disabled children want? What do they most value in services?

Views of disabled children and young people

There have been some recent important studies.

- The Ask Project In 1999, The Children's Society used a multi-media approach to involve young disabled people in influencing policy developments as part of the Quality Protects programme to improve local authority services for children.
- Two Way Street Triangle and NSPCC produced a training video for practitioners to build skills and confidence in communicating with children who do not use speech and language.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2001, produced an overview of the findings from both these projects. They showed clearly that disabled children and young people:

- a) want to be respected and have say in their lives
 - b) to have equipment and support which would enable them to go out with friends, belong to clubs and go to local parks. Young people wanted to go to pubs.
 - c) they wanted to challenge negative assumptions from professionals.
- Sport England sent a questionnaire in 1999 to 5,600 disabled children and young people aged 6-16 years. Almost 50% responded. They found that while most participated in sport they did not participate in sport as much as other children or as much as they wished. The most common barriers were lack of money, health considerations, unsuitability of local sports facilities and having no one to go with.
 - Sharing Value Project The Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, has been researching what services are most valued by disabled youngsters and their families. They met with seven focus groups – three with disabled children and two with parent carers. The children were assisted to communicate in a variety of ways. The children's perceptions of "quality" were firmly grounded in the clubs and activities they attended. They identified four key themes: staff attitudes and approach, relationships, community links and personal development.
 - a) Staff attitudes: amongst all three groups staff attitude and approach was a key criterion of quality. They continually highlighted the importance of how staff perceived and treated them. In particular they valued staff making them feel welcome and part of the service.
 - b) Relationships: quality services were those which respect friendships and seek to nurture them

- c) Personal development: quality services encourage choice making; they unobtrusively interweave personal self-development with fun
- d) Community links: services which enabled them to participate in activities as well as opportunities to go out to and enjoy local amenities.

The Sharing Value project also examined parents' views of valued services. Parent carers identified, as key to quality services:

- Helpful staff attitudes and approach - listening to and acting on parents' ideas and experiences
- Accessible information – jargon free and providing regular updates.

These recent studies all show how important play and leisure are to disabled children and young people and how vital staff are in providing choices and opportunities to make this happen.

References to these studies are listed below in Appendix 1 along with key play and leisure organisations.

3. Rights to play and leisure

Do disabled children and young people and their families have any rights in law to challenge their social exclusion?

1. Legislation

The Children Act (1989) recognises that “children’s need for good quality play opportunities change as they grow up but they need such opportunities throughout childhood to reach and maintain their optimum development and well being.” The Act says that Local Authorities shall provide services to minimise the effect of disabilities on the lives of disabled children and give them opportunities to lead as normal a life as possible. Local authorities must treat disabled children as children first and promote access for all children to the same range of services.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people. It requires service providers to “make reasonable adjustments” to policies, practices and procedures which discriminate. Part III of the Act will be implemented in 2004 and will cover indoor and outdoor adventure playgrounds, leisure centres, play areas in public parks and playgroups.

Special Needs Education and Disability Act (2001) In September 2002, the part of the Act relating to discrimination will come in to force. This Act will place a duty on all education providers to ensure that they have made reasonable adjustments to include a child with a disability or special

educational need within a mainstream setting. This means that the focus is on schools to include children with disabilities in all aspects of school life. Schools will have to provide justification for not including disabled children on school trips, holidays and accessing leisure opportunities.

2. Government Policies

The Government has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has stated its opposition to all forms of social exclusion.

The Government has introduced a wide number of initiatives designed to improve outcomes for all children and young people, e.g. Sure Start, Children's Fund and the new Connexions services. The Children and Young People's Unit are developing a cross-government strategy for all children and young people. This strategy will aim to bring together all government policies affecting children and young people. The focus of the strategy will be on how to plan and deliver services which are centred on the needs of the child.

Some recent government policy initiatives are particularly relevant to opportunities for leisure and play.

1. Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families, issued by Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and Home Office, 2000.

This guidance states that children including disabled children should be involved in the assessment process. Disabled children and young people have rights to be consulted about matters which affect their lives. Children with communication difficulties should be enabled with specialist help to contribute to their assessment.

2. Valuing people, a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century, issued by the Department of Health, 2001 (Chapter 3)

This states that one of the government objectives is to ensure that "disabled children gain maximum life chances..." It spells out that children must have access to play and leisure opportunities.

3. The Government has introduced programmes which should enhance access to play and leisure for disabled children. These include:

- Quality Protects
The Government has issued guidance to Social Services Departments making it clear that numbers of disabled children accessing play and leisure should increase.
- New Opportunities Fund (NOF)
NOF is funding programmes such as PE and Sport in Schools and Activities for Young People (out door adventures) - both of which can be used to provide more opportunities for disabled children.
- Sure Start
Guidance to Sure Start projects states that disabled children require increased access to play opportunities, including one-to-one support and adapted toys and equipment.

Despite these important developments, our survey shows that the majority of disabled children are still being excluded from leisure opportunities at a fundamental level. What else should Government be doing?

Contact a Family's message to central and local government and to service providers is set out below.

4. Recommendations

Summary of main points

1. Disabled children and young people and their families should have equal opportunities to participate in the full range of mainstream play and leisure activities.
2. Providers (public, private and voluntary) must take account of the views needs and ideas of disabled children and their families when planning and developing services.
3. Staff attitudes and training are vital in enabling disabled children to be fully included.

Here are some of the things that could be done to improve play and leisure opportunities for children with disabilities. Implementing just one or two of these recommendations could make a difference to families.

Contact a Family's policy recommendations are:

To Central Government

- Appoint a Disabled Children's champion, within Government, to ensure that the needs of disabled children are not overlooked within the wider policy and strategic context
- Provide additional funding through the National Childcare Strategy to all Early Years and Childcare Development Partnerships to create more places for younger disabled children in pre-school settings
- Issue guidance to all local authorities to help them develop inclusive leisure strategies for disabled children and young people
- Create a new ring-fenced capital fund for voluntary and statutory providers to both establish new facilities and upgrade existing centres
- Fund the production of a National Leisure Guide for disabled children and their families
- Develop a National Disability Awareness Staff Training Programme for all Government funded play and leisure projects

To providers in all sectors

- Work out who is not using the service and why
- Talk to disabled children and young people and their families about their needs
- Look at examples of good practice
- Devise an inclusive strategy for mainstream services
- Incorporate special activities especially for disabled children who find large settings difficult – for example, one to one swimming lessons.
- Review physical access to the service in relation to promoting independence for the wheelchair user – ramps, doors they can open, disabled seating areas mixed in with ordinary seating so that children are not physically isolated from their friends, accessible toilets.
- Use bright colours, textures and sounds to involve children with sensory impairments

To Local Authorities

- Provide Leisure Passes for parent carers to avoid queues and get concessions
- Provide more disabled parking spaces at key leisure centres and monitor and police them
- Extend the Blue Badge Scheme to include a greater range of disabilities
- Fund volunteer buddy schemes which assist disabled children and young people to attend clubs and activities
- Fund escorted taxi services to take disabled young people to clubs
- Install gates beside stiles on tourist paths and country walks
- Upgrade public toilets in key public areas, including large shopping malls and parks, to include changing beds for older children in nappies
- Provide funding for integrated playgrounds, in terms of equipment and wheelchair access
- Only give planning permission to new local leisure ventures when they meet standards on accessible toilets, changing facilities and physical access
- Publish annually updated local guides to accessible facilities and activities for children
- Publish guidance on good practice to private providers

To Social Services

- Make leisure and play an integral part of the framework for the assessment of children in need and their families
- Ensure that representatives of the Leisure and Youth Services are an integral part of the multi-agency planning for disabled children's services
- Consult with disabled children and young people and their families about their unmet leisure needs and wishes and build these into Quality Protects Management Action Plans
- Support practical initiatives such as one to one buddy schemes

To staff in all leisure and play settings

- Make Disability Awareness Training compulsory for all staff
- Include specific training such as deaf awareness
- Include equal opportunities and awareness of multiple disadvantages of families from minority ethnic communities
- Employ disabled people to provide services
- Promote a can-do attitude
- Portray images of disabled children in all publicity material
- Offer a range of activities for different ages, interests and abilities
- Purchase items and equipment which will increase the range of activities for disabled children

References and useful organisations

References

1. Consulting with disabled children and young people, Findings, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, July 2001.
2. Young disabled people and sport, N. Finch, D. Lawton, J. Williams & P.Sloper, Research Works Series, SPRU, University of York, November 2001
3. Quality in services for disabled children and their families: what can theory, policy and research on children's and parents' views tell us?, Wendy Mitchell & Patricia Sloper, Children & Society, vol. 15 (2001) pp237-252.

Useful sources of information and guidance

1. Ask Us CD-Rom and Resource Pack available from The Children's Society, Publishing Department, Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL.
2. Young People's Charter for Participation, The Children's Society. This charter was developed using research with over 400 young people. It includes principles, standards and action plans for organisations on involving and making services accessible to all young people. Available from The Children's Society (see address above).
3. Two-way Street training Video and handbook about communicating with disabled children from NSPCC Training Centre, 3 Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, LS4 1EZ.
4. Side by side; guidelines for inclusive play, Kidsactive, 2000.
5. It just doesn't happen, inclusive management for inclusive play, P.Douch, Kidsactive, 2002.

Kidsactive is the national charity which runs adventure playgrounds for disabled children. The above publications are detailed guides to providing inclusive play. The organisation also has funding from the Department of Education and Skills (DfES) to deliver in-depth training courses for senior play and out of school workers and to support play providers on inclusive practice. Contact Joanna Ryam, Project Manager, or Rachel Scott, at Kidsactive, 020 7731 1435, email pip@kidsactive.org.uk. Visit their website at www.kidsactive.org.uk.

6. Action for Leisure is a voluntary organisation working to promote play, leisure and recreation for disabled children and adults and their carers. They publish guidance on strategies for inclusion and sell useful equipment. Visit their website on www.actionforleisure.org.uk or telephone 01926 650195

7. Kids Clubs in Action: Tackling inequalities. This is a good practice guide with a section on including disabled children in out of school clubs. It can be downloaded for free from the website www.kidsclubs.org.uk or telephone 020 7512 2100. Kids Club is a national organisation for out of school care and publishes a number of useful publications for providers.

Appendix 2

Attractions Recommended by Parents

Key:

Q = no queuing

C = concessions

S = staff are helpful

T = excellent toilet facilities

P = good parking

Recommended by a parent of a child with:

PD = physical disabilities

LD = learning disabilities

SD = sensory impairment

CB = challenging behaviour

Au = Autism

Theme Parks

Thorpe Park, Windsor	S, Q, C	LD, PD, CB
Euro Disney, Paris	Q	PD
Flamingo Land Park and Zoo, North Yorkshire	S	PD, LD
Drayton Manor Family Theme Park, Staffs	S	PD, LD
American Adventure Theme Park, Notts		
Gulliver's World, Warrington (2-13 yr olds)		
Flambards Village Theme Park, Cornwall	Q, S	PD

Zoos

London Zoo (open day for special needs children)	S, C, T	PD
Chester Zoo	S, T, C, P	PD
Drusillas Zoo, East Sussex	P, C	PD, Au
Bristol Zoo		
Marwell Zoo, Hants	P, Q	LD
Clifton Zoo, Bristol		
Twycross Zoo, Leicester		
Butterfly & Insect World, Edinburgh		
Colchester Zoo	S	PD

Museums

Manchester Science and Industry Museum		Au
National Railway Museum, York	C	Au, PD
Beamish Museum, County Durham		Au
Eureka, Halifax (interactive)		
Jorvik Viking Museum, York	C	Au, PD
Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh (interactive)		
Explore at Bristol (interactive)	S	PD
Centre for Life, Newcastle (interactive)		Au
Glasgow Science Park (interactive)		
London Dungeon	S	PD, LD
Discovery Museum, London (free admission)	P	
Vikingar Centre, Largs, Scotland		PD
BBC Experience, London		PD

Leisure Parks

Oakwood Leisure Park, Wales	S, C, Q	PD, LD
Blair Drummond Safari Park, Scotland		
Knowsley Safari Park, Merseyside		Au, PD
Poulton's Park, Hants	C, S, T	PD, CB
The Look Out Discovery Park, Berkshire	S	PD
Paradise Wildlife Park, Herts		PD, LD
Child Beale Park, Berks		LD
Shires, Crealey	S	PD

Sea Life Centres

Birmingham Sea Life Centre	C	PD, LD, SD
Deep Sea World, South Queensferry, Scotland	S	PD
Blue Planet Aquarium, Cheshire	C, S	PD
Sea Life, Blackpool		SD
Sea Life, Wexmouth		PD
Anglesey Sea Zoo, Wales		
Great Yarmouth Sea Life Centre	S	PD

Parks

Kew Gardens, London		
Sandwell Park		PD

Playgrounds

Thames Valley Adventure Playground, Berkshire		LD
-----------------------------------------------	--	----

Stately Homes

Harewood House, York		
----------------------	--	--

Farms

Folly Farm, Pembrokeshire, Wales	S	PD, LD
Odds Farm Park, Bucks		
Fishers Farm Park, West Sussex		

Leisure Centres

Bracknell Leisure Centre, Berkshire (Woosh soft play)		PD, LD
Bexhill Leisure Centre, East Sussex (holiday clubs and trampolining)		Au

Good days out/holidays

Lake District		PD
National Parks		
Nevis Range Development, Scotland	C, S	PD
Fort William, Scotland		
Edinburgh Castle		
Centre Parks, Sherwood/Longleat Forest		
Berwick Holiday Centre, Northumberland		
Blackpool, Lancashire		Au
Bognor Regis, West Sussex (wheelchair friendly town)		PD

Survey Form

Attention! Parents of children with disabilities and special needs!

Are you and your disabled child/young person (under 19) able to enjoy the local amenities in your community? How easy is it for you to take your whole family out for the day?

Contact a Family believes that local leisure activities should be equally open to all children regardless of their disability. We are collecting parents' views and good and bad stories (UK only). We will use the information to press for better services for your children.

We would be grateful if you could spend a few moments answering the questions below.

 **Please return your completed questionnaires to: Contact a Family, Freepost Lon 8801, LONDON, EC1B 1EE by 30 April 2002.**
OR you can fill it in our website at www.cafamily.org.uk/leisure.html

1. Please enter your postcode _____

2. What type of disability does your child have? *Please tick all that apply.*

- Learning
- Physical
- Sensory
- Multi
- Medical
- Communication

3. How old is your child? *Please tick.*

- Under 5 years
- Between 5 - 11 years
- 12 years and above

If your child is over 12 years old, does he or she have access to a youth club?

- Yes
- No

4. Do you have to travel out of your local area to get to suitable leisure facilities for your disabled child?

- Yes
 No

5. Thinking about your **local** leisure services and your disabled child's needs, please tell us what you think of the facilities at each of the following. *Please write a number in each box where:*

1 = very poor 2 = poor 3 = ok 4 = good 5 = excellent

	Carers'/disabled child concession	Disabled parking spaces	Disabled toilet facilities	Changing facilities	Physical accessibility	Staff attitudes/staff training
Swimming pool	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Theatre	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Cinema	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Museum	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Playground	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Park	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Football matches	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bowling alley	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

6. Have you ever decided **not** to go on an outing for any of the following reasons?
Please tick.

- Because my child cannot wait in long queues:
Yes No
- Because it is set up in a way that makes me and/or my family feel uncomfortable:
Yes No
- Because I do not have a car and public transport from my home is inadequate:
Yes No
- Because having a disabled child limits our budget for outings:
Yes No

7. Is there a local restaurant to which you can comfortably take your whole family?
Yes No

8. Please tick up to six of the following which your disabled child needs in order to be able enjoy local activities:

- After school clubs which include special needs.
- Holiday clubs which include special needs.
- Special needs activities which include siblings.
- Special help for children who find large groups difficult.
- One to one help so my child can participate.
- A companion to go with my child.
- Training for staff in understanding the needs of disabled children.
- More information about what is available.
- Reduced fees for disabled children and their carers.
- A greater range of provision at different places and time.
- Supervised transport to and from activities.
- Sensitivity to my cultural group.
- Activities for teenagers.

9. Taking into account your child's disabilities and the needs of the rest of your children, rate any of the following attractions you have tried as to how good a family day they provide overall. *Please tick.*

	Never been	Very Poor	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent
Alton Towers, Cheshire	<input type="radio"/>					
Chessington World of Adventures	<input type="radio"/>					
Legoland, Buckinghamshire	<input type="radio"/>					
London Eye	<input type="radio"/>					
Blackpool Pleasure Beach	<input type="radio"/>					
Camelot, Preston	<input type="radio"/>					
Lightwater Valley, Yorkshire	<input type="radio"/>					
Odyssey Arena, Belfast	<input type="radio"/>					
Techniquest, Cardiff	<input type="radio"/>					
Edinburgh Zoo	<input type="radio"/>					

- Is there is a major attraction (not listed here) you have been to which you would recommend to other families? If yes, please write in the space overleaf to tell us what it was and why it was good place to go with your disabled child?

10. Is your disabled child able to go to mainstream after-school activities/clubs?

Yes No

If you answered no, is the problem (tick all that apply):

- unwelcoming inaccessible cost transport
 distance lack of information special needs not met
 wrong age group a special needs group would be better for my child

contact a family
for families with disabled children

Getting in contact with us

Freephone helpline for parents and carers

0808 808 3555

Access to over 170 languages

www.cafamily.org.uk

www.makingcontact.org