

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



## Holidays, play and leisure

Information for families

UK

Incorporating **The Lady Hoare Trust**

## Introduction

Many disabled children and young people say that leisure and play – after school, in the holidays and at weekends – is the most important missing element in their lives. Parents strive to make opportunities for these but often find many unnecessary barriers, including a basic lack of information about what's available.

This guide provides some information about what play and leisure options may be available and where to find more information. It also has information about arranging holidays for disabled children and details of organisations which provide grants for these types of activities

## Contents

Your child's rights.....	3
Your rights as a carer.....	4
Play and leisure in your area.....	6
Help paying for leisure activities.....	7
Contacts for information on play and leisure.....	9
Indoor play resources.....	11
Disability sport.....	13
Days out.....	15
Holidays.....	18
Help to pay for holidays.....	18
Finding a holiday and travel insurance.....	20
Wish-granting charities.....	22
Equipment and mobility.....	23
Books to help your child play.....	24
Your child's rights to protection against discrimination.....	26
Your child's rights across the UK.....	27
Making play and leisure work for disabled children.....	30



## Your child's rights

All children need the chance to play. Governments in the UK recognise that disabled children need good quality play and leisure opportunities. And these must be available throughout their childhood to reach and maintain their highest development and wellbeing.

You may find it helpful to know that your disabled child (or young person) has certain rights relating to play and leisure.

Additionally, under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

## Local authority duties to disabled children

Your child also has rights to play and leisure in their local area. Services for disabled children are set out under Section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and under the Children Act 1989. These Acts apply to England and Wales only but there is similar legislation for Scotland and Northern Ireland (see page 27 for more information).

For example, under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, services are given to an individual disabled child and do not extend to other members of

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

the family. Depending on local criteria, services include:

- provision of leisure facilities (this could mean outings or a placement at a day centre), or
- education facilities (this could mean home-based education, or funding for the personal care needs of students so they can study)
- travel and other help, like travel to and from a day centre
- holidays.

The Children Act 1989 sets out a range of support services which should be available. Services listed in the Act include:

- occupational, social, cultural or recreational activities
- help to allow your child and family to have a holiday
- travel assistance.

Under the Act:

- social services can give help which will benefit other family members, like siblings and other carers
- local authorities (LAs) should give services to minimise the effect of disabilities on the lives of disabled children and give them opportunities to reach their full potential.

LAs must treat disabled children as children first and promote access for all children to the same range of services.



## Your rights as a carer

In England and Wales, the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 requires local authorities to tell carers about their rights to an assessment. The Act also makes sure that leisure opportunities are considered when you're being assessed. You may be able to get, for example, gym membership, massages or leisure classes to relieve stress. There is similar legislation in Scotland and Northern Ireland. See page 27.

## Short Breaks

Short breaks allow your child to have a change of scene, try different experiences, have fun and make friends. You may already get breaks from caring by asking family, friends or neighbours to take charge from time to time, but you may need a more formal arrangement that doesn't depend on other people being available and willing to help.

Having a break can give you valuable time to recharge your batteries. You might want to spend time with your other children, friends, or just relax in the bath. If you have regular breaks it may also make your life easier if you ever have to leave your child with someone, as they will be used to this happening occasionally.

Short breaks come in all shapes and sizes and can include:

- Care at home - includes sitting services, which means someone to sit with or 'mind' your child, and care attendant schemes, which give help of various kinds at home, including sitting.
- Day care away from home - includes nurseries, playgroups, opportunity groups, nursery schools and classes for pre-school children as well as child and family centres. There may also be out of school and weekend clubs and, during school holidays, access to playschemes.
- Residential breaks - includes residential homes, special units in hospitals and hospices. Talk to your local social services department.
- Family link schemes - where your child stays with another family on a regular basis or occasionally.

There is a legal duty on local authorities to provide a range of short breaks services for disabled children in their area. See page 27 for more information about short breaks and key legislation for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Call our freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555 and ask how to access leisure

activities in your area. They can tell you how to contact your local social services department and ask for an assessment of your own and your child's needs. More information about your child's rights and the law is on page 27.

These organisations may be helpful too:

### **The Short Breaks Network - England Wales Northern Ireland**

---

The Short Breaks Network is the co-ordinating body for the short break sector working with local authorities, voluntary sector and other short break providers, parents and practitioners. They have information about short breaks and links to where to go to get a short breaks in your area.

**01749 689 259**

**[www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk/](http://www.shortbreaksnetwork.org.uk/)**

### **Shared Care Scotland**

---

Shared Care Scotland has accessible, up-to-date information and advice to those who use, provide or plan short break services. They have a national online database which includes holiday accommodation and activity programmes that are accessible to disabled children and young people.

**01383 622462**

**[www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**





## Play and leisure in your area

### Who to ask about services

In England and Wales, your local Family Information Service can give parents of disabled children details about what services are available. This includes information about play and leisure. Your school or children's centre may also have access to this information. Or call Contact a Family's freephone helpline.

If you want to know more about leisure facilities and clubs in your area, you could also contact a local parent support group or carers centre. Some run their own activities and, if not, may know who does. Our freephone helpline can check if there is a group in your area. You can also ask your child's social worker or, if you don't have one, contact the local children with disabilities team.

You can also find information at:

- your local library
- your local council website
- a local leisure or youth service for details of inclusive facilities
- sports clubs
- a national organisation, like Phab (see page 9) or Special Olympics GB (see page 14).

If you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland contact our office in your area for more information about leisure and sports for children and young people.

### Contact a Family Cymru

---

**029 20 39 6624**

### Contact a Family Northern Ireland

---

**028 9262 7552**

### Contact a Family Scotland

---

**0131 659 2930**

# Help paying for leisure activities

## Direct Payments and Personal Budgets

Local authorities can give payments instead of services to allow disabled people and carers to buy the services they have been assessed as needing; for example, for your child to go to a local club or play scheme. Direct Payments are for parents and their disabled children who would like to manage their own social care needs.

Some families can also get 'Individual' or 'Personal Budgets' to arrange services. The budget is an amount allocated by social services after an assessment which is usually based on a points-based system.

Phone our freephone helpline for more information on Personal Budgets and what Direct Payments can be used for. You can ask for a copy of our guides to Direct Payments on 0808 808 3555.

## How much are Direct Payments?

The amount of money you get should be enough to allow you to meet all costs, including tax and national insurance, as well as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) police checks.

Contact our freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555 for more information.



## Are you claiming all the benefits you're entitled to?

Certain benefits can lead to more help. For example, if your child gets higher rate Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) you can get discounts on road tax for your car and a Blue Badge to help you with parking your car. If your child has any award of DLA or PIP or is registered blind, you can get a Cinema Exhibitor's Association Card – free tickets for a person to go with a child to the cinema. Also, many local attractions offer discount schemes and queue jump passes for disabled people and their carers. Ask when you book.

**Call our freephone helpline and speak to our benefits experts. They can check that you're claiming everything you're entitled to.**

**0808 808 3555**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**





## Contacts for information about play and leisure

There are many local and national bodies and organisations which give information about play and leisure for disabled children. Here are just a few:

### Smart Play Network (Scotland)

---

The Smart Play Network is a Scottish charity supporting toy libraries and play services. They have projects in Dundee, Fife and Edinburgh.

**0131 664 2746**

**[www.smartplaynetwork.org](http://www.smartplaynetwork.org)**

### Linn Park Adventure Playground, Glasgow (Scotland)

---

Play centre for children aged 5-12 with additional support needs. They have a sensory room and do arts and crafts activities. They have a large outdoor space, including climbing frame, sandpit, chute, swings, wheelchair swings and lots more. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**0141 633 1493**

### The Yard, Edinburgh (Scotland)

---

The Yard is a purpose built indoor and outdoor adventure playground in Edinburgh for children and young people with disabilities. They run several youth clubs, a transitions club and activity sessions for schools during the week.

**0131 476 4506**

**[www.theyardscotland.org.uk](http://www.theyardscotland.org.uk)**

### KIDS (England)

---

KIDS offer practical help and support to disabled children, young people and their families across England, including specialist nurseries and crèches, short breaks, play schemes, youth groups and sibling support groups, plus training (in Makaton, for example), and keyworking for parents.

**020 7520 0405**

**[www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)**

### The Calvert Trust (Exmoor, Kielder, Lake District)

---

This charity specialises in accessible activity adventures for people of all ages with all types of disability. Accommodation is fully accessible, (the Exmoor centre has the only 5 star rated activity accommodation in the country!) The Calvert Trust offers adventure activities like abseiling, sailing, canoeing, archery, horse riding, carriage driving, climbing and many others.

**[www.calvert-trust.org.uk](http://www.calvert-trust.org.uk)**

### Phab England and Wales

---

A charity dedicated to inclusive clubs, holidays, annual summer programmes of activities, sailing, short breaks and adventure holidays for disabled and non-disabled children.

**020 8667 9443**

**[www.phab.org.uk](http://www.phab.org.uk)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## **FABB Scotland (Facilitating Access and Breaking Barriers)**

---

A charity dedicated to inclusive clubs, holidays, annual summer programmes of activities, sailing, short breaks and adventure holidays for disabled and non-disabled children.

**0131 475 2313**

**[www.fabb.org.uk](http://www.fabb.org.uk)**

## **Mencap Wales Play Our Way**

---

A project to improve access to leisure facilities for young people with a learning disability in Wales. Young ambassadors assess how accessible leisure activities are for young people with a learning disability, and work with service providers to improve them.

**Wales Learning Disability freephone helpline: 0808 808 1111**

**[www.mencap.org.uk/wales/projects](http://www.mencap.org.uk/wales/projects)**

## **Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card (UK)**

---

UK wide card scheme for participating cinemas. The card holder is entitled to one free ticket for a person to go to the cinema with them. To apply for the card, you or your child will need to meet one of the following criteria:

- be in receipt of DLA
- Attendance Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP); or
- be a registered blind person.

The card is valid for one year from the date of issue and currently costs £5.50.

**0845 123 1292**

**[www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)**

## **The Stagecoach Charitable Trust**

---

Charity that runs free drama, music and movement classes for children and young people with disabilities aged 9-19. Designed to grow self confidence, independence and life skills, the classes are run by qualified teachers and helpers. Covers Bristol, Colchester, Eastleigh, Hampton, Isleworth, Llanelli, Oxford, Plymouth and Walton-on-Thames and from September 2014 Leeds.

**01932 254333**

**[www.stagecoachtrust.co.uk](http://www.stagecoachtrust.co.uk)**

## **Stagetext (England Wales)**

---

Stagetext provides captioning and live speech-to-text services in theatres and other arts and cultural venues for people with varying types of deafness. Visit their website to find Stagetext performances near you.

**020 7377 0540**

**[www.stagetext.org](http://www.stagetext.org)**

## **VocalEyes (England)**

---

VocalEyes is an audio description charity. They capture the visual elements of a theatre piece, painting, or environment that a blind or partially-sighted person might miss and describe them in clear, vivid language. They aim to provide access to the arts for blind and partially-sighted people. Visit their website to find VocalEyes performances near you.

**020 7375 1043**

**[www.vocaleyeyes.co.uk](http://www.vocaleyeyes.co.uk)**

## Euan's Guide (UK)

---

The aim of this new online guide is to give a friendly, honest alternative to hours of web searching and phone calls to remove the 'fear of the unknown' when visiting a venue for the first time. Euan's Guide features disabled access reviews from disabled people, their friends and families.

**0131 510 5106**

**[www.euansguide.com](http://www.euansguide.com)**

## Cedar Foundation (NI)

---

Northern Ireland charity that delivers a range of services, including youth work, trips to the cinema, canoeing and other leisure activities for disabled children and young people. They work throughout Northern Ireland.

**028 9066 6188**

**[www.cedar-foundation.org](http://www.cedar-foundation.org)**

## Mencap NI

---

Mencap offer a range of youth services and projects in Northern Ireland for children and young people with a learning disability. They have a play adviser and run summer schemes.

**The Northern Ireland Learning Disability Helpline 0808 808 1111**

**[helpline.ni@mencap.org.uk](mailto:helpline.ni@mencap.org.uk)**

**[www.mencap.org.uk/northern-ireland](http://www.mencap.org.uk/northern-ireland)**

## The Disabled Photographers' Society (UK)

---

Offers technical support and help for disabled photographers and information on all aspects of photography for people with disabilities.

**[www.disabledphotographers.co.uk](http://www.disabledphotographers.co.uk)**



## Indoor play and leisure resources

### Sensory Toy Warehouse

---

A website set up by a parent which stocks accessibly-priced, tactile, interactive and stimulating multi-sensory resources, special needs toys and extraordinary novelties for disabled children. Prices start from under £1.

**[www.sensorytoywarehouse.com](http://www.sensorytoywarehouse.com)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## The Letterbox Library

Has a catalogue of disability-related books for children with disabilities and their siblings, and for use in school or other settings, that promote understanding and explain 'difference' for all ages from babies to eleven years old.

**0207 534 7502**

**[www.letterboxlibrary.com](http://www.letterboxlibrary.com)**

## Calibre Audio Library

UK charity that lends audio books through a free, nationwide postal service. Young Calibre is a free postal library bringing the fun of audio books for anyone under 16 who can't see properly, or has dyslexia or another disability which makes it difficult to read ordinary print. Over 16s can join the main library.

**01296 432 339**

**[www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk)**

## ITV Signed Stories

Signed Stories helps improve the literacy of deaf children from infancy upwards by allowing them to share in the joy of storytelling. The website also provides useful advice and guidance for parents, carers and teachers of deaf children, and for the deaf parents of hearing children.

**[www.signedstories.com](http://www.signedstories.com)**

## BBC Ouch

For older teenagers and adults, Ouch explores the disability world in blog posts and a monthly internet radio talk show.

**[www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs/ouch](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs/ouch)**

## Disability Arts Online

An online journal for discussion of arts and culture, giving disabled and deaf artists, performers, film-makers, writers, and critics a place to talk about and share artistic practice.

**[www.disabilityartsonline.org](http://www.disabilityartsonline.org)**

## Shut Up and Listen

Broadcast every month, Shut Up and Listen radio shows are available anytime to listen to and download from the website. Shut Up and Listen is the only place on the radio to hear music made by artists with a learning disability.

**[www.carousel.org.uk/projects/shut-up-and-listen/](http://www.carousel.org.uk/projects/shut-up-and-listen/)**

## Living Paintings (UK)

This free postal library supports blind and partially sighted adults, children and young people. They make tactile versions of pictures that come to life when fingers feel them.

Audio descriptions tell the pictures' stories while directing the fingertips across the tactile image, describing what is being touched, felt and 'seen'. The tactile story books for children also include clear braille sheets between each page of text so they can read the text of the story themselves. Free postage in the UK.

**[www.livingpaintings.org](http://www.livingpaintings.org)**





## Disability sport

### WheelPower (UK)

---

WheelPower promotes equality for people with physical disabilities around the UK by organising introductory and competitive sports for children and adults. They list sports and where to find your nearest centre to play them. They also run a number of events, including youth sport camps.

**01296 395995**

**[www.wheelpower.org.uk](http://www.wheelpower.org.uk)**

### Scottish Disability Sport

---

Leading the development of sport in Scotland for people of all ages and abilities with a physical, sensory or learning disability.

**0131 317 1130**

**[www.scottishdisabilitysport.com](http://www.scottishdisabilitysport.com)**

### Disability Sport Wales

---

Develops sporting and physical activity opportunities for disabled children and people. They have details of disability sport coaches throughout Wales and a Community database where you can find your nearest club by sport and disability.

**[www.fdsww.org.uk](http://www.fdsww.org.uk)**

### Disability Sport Northern Ireland

---

Runs a range of events, participation programmes, training courses and services, all designed to give local disabled children and adults the opportunity to lead a full and active lifestyle through sport and physical recreation.

**028 9046 9925**

**[www.dsni.co.uk](http://www.dsni.co.uk)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## English Federation of Disability Sport

---

Represents the sporting and physical activity interests of disabled people and organisations in England. Provides inclusion training for sports coaches. Information on finding the right sport for you, clubs, and examples of good practice.

**01509 227750**

**[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)**

## Special Olympics Great Britain

---

Provides sporting opportunities for children with a learning disability from the age of five and adults. If your child is interested in sport, they provide training programmes, regardless of ability or degree of learning disability.

**020 7247 8891**

**[www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk](http://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk)**

## Freedom in the Air (UK)

---

A charity giving disabled youngsters the opportunity to fly, either in a light aircraft, or to pilot an aircraft with full supervision of aviation safety practices. Family members are welcome.

**01234 752 272**

**[www.freedomintheair.org](http://www.freedomintheair.org)**

## Aerobility (UK)

---

Aerobility is a user-led charity providing opportunities in aviation for individuals with disabilities. Whether it is a trial flight, a fun aviation education session or a trip in a flight simulator, there is something for everyone. Aerobility aims to break down barriers to participation so that as many people as possible can enjoy the magic of flight.

**0303 303 1230**

**[www.bdfa.net](http://www.bdfa.net)**

## Level Playing Field (England Wales Scotland)

---

Level Playing Field (LPF) is the national charity for England and Wales representing disabled fans of all sports together with their personal assistants and advocates. Level Playing Field acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership across all sports. On the website, you'll find information on disabled fans' facilities at clubs and stadia in England, Wales and Scotland. You can also read reports, guides, and general disabled supporter information.

**01244 893584**

**[www.levelplayingfield.org.uk](http://www.levelplayingfield.org.uk)**



## Days out

Many major attractions and organisations in the UK allow a parent or other carer accompanying a disabled person free entry. Venues should have accessibility information on their websites or you can call them in advance. It's worth giving places you want to visit a call - they can tell you about accessibility and documents you might need to take advantage of any offers.

### Day out with the kids (UK)

Website to help find accessible family outings around the UK.

**[www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk](http://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk)**

### The National Trust (England Wales Northern Ireland)

The National Trust has more than 300 historic places and gardens to visit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Most properties have a good degree of access and their admission policy has an 'admit one' card in the name of the disabled visitor, so a carer can go free of charge.

Free on the National Trust website, the 'Access for All' guide has information about the accessibility of their properties. You can also book holidays and camping. Search for 'visitors with disabilities' on their website.

**0844 800 1895**

**[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Visit Woods (UK)

---

Visit Woods is a project by the Woodland Trust to make woodlands more accessible. Guides on the Visit Woods website have information about accessibility and facilities to help you plan your visit.

**01476 581135**

**[www.visitwoods.org.uk](http://www.visitwoods.org.uk)**

## Phototrails (UK)

---

Phototrails aims to help everyone discover and enjoy access to the countryside, tailored to their own needs and preferences. The website aims to provide an up-to-date guide to the accessibility of countryside sites and trails throughout the UK.

**[www.phototrails.org](http://www.phototrails.org)**

## Seagull Trust Cruises (Scotland)

---

Seagull Trust Cruises is a charity run by volunteers which offers free cruises on Scotland's canals for people with special needs. Cruises run from branches throughout Scotland. The Trust also has available a purpose-built holiday boat based at Falkirk.

**[www.seagulltrust.org.uk](http://www.seagulltrust.org.uk)**

## Culture 24 (UK)

---

The Culture 24 website has information on more than 4,000 museums, galleries and heritage sites. There is also an interactive children's website called Culture Street, with details of family-friendly museums and family days out.

**01273 623 266**

**[www.culture24.org.uk](http://www.culture24.org.uk)**

"Always check the disability policy of venues you go to - lots of attractions let carers in for free."

Jane

## Safari and wildlife parks (England, Scotland and Wales)

---

Web resource for safari and wildlife parks with contact details, opening times and admission information. Clickable links take you to each park's information where you'll find details on accessibility.

**[www.safaripark.co.uk](http://www.safaripark.co.uk)**

## Walks with Wheelchairs (UK)

---

A website providing free information on routes that are suitable for those that use a wheelchair.

**[www.walkswithwheelchairs.com](http://www.walkswithwheelchairs.com)**

## Riding for the Disabled (UK)

---

Gives disabled children and people of any age the opportunity to ride, vault, or carriage drive. Suitable for children with physical and learning difficulties. You can search for your nearest centre on their website or give them a call.

**0845 658 1082**

**[www.rda.org.uk](http://www.rda.org.uk)**





## **The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain Family Days Out (UK)**

---

This guide, produced with Motability, has over 200 ideas for days out. They include accessibility information and reviews, hints and tips by disabled visitors. The online guide to family days out has family-friendly attractions, all visited and reviewed by disabled children and their families. This means children of all ages have road tested them. It is available free online.

**[www.accessibleguide.co.uk/familydaysout](http://www.accessibleguide.co.uk/familydaysout)**

## **The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain**

---

This is the rough guide for disabled adults, with days out at museums, parks, scenic drives, coastal towns and more. They have all been reviewed by disabled people and have hints and tips on making the best of your day out. May be suitable for older children.

**[www.accessibleguide.co.uk](http://www.accessibleguide.co.uk)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**



## Holidays

Everyone needs a change of scene from time to time. You may find some of the organisations on the next pages useful for ideas and information on the different holidays to choose from. There are many organisations which provide holidays and holiday accommodation for families and disabled children.

## Help to pay for holidays

Families with disabled children may be entitled to help from local social services departments. Some authorities may give grants towards holiday costs, others may offer holidays at places of your own choice. Some local authorities insist on means testing and, even when grants are available, they are usually small. Some charities that help towards holiday costs are listed on the next pages.

*"Holidays are great now. With Direct Payments we take a support worker along - my son has a wonderful time and mum gets a break as well!"*

**Jane**

## Other financial help

Contact a Family can tell you about all aspects of the benefits and tax credits system to make sure you are claiming all you are entitled to. Our advisers can also look for charitable grants you may be able to apply for to go on holiday, plus other financial help which may be available. Call the Contact a Family freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555.

## Turn2us (UK)

---

Turn2us is a charity providing an online service to help people access information on all benefits and grants available to them from both statutory and voluntary organisations in the UK. In many cases, applications for support can be made directly from the website and people can be kept informed by email, or by text to their mobile phone.

[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## Family Fund (UK)

---

May be able to help towards holiday costs for a family when there is a disabled or seriously-ill child from birth to 17 years old. Grants are a contribution towards family holidays with or without the child. You can apply to the Fund if:

- you live in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales
- you have evidence of your entitlement to one the following: Universal Credit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance,

Housing Benefit and Pension Credit. If you do not get any of these, more information may be needed to finish your application

- you have permanent, legal residency in the UK and have lived in the UK for six months.

The Family Fund works with a range of providers, including Haven and Butlins amongst others, so that families can choose the best holiday for themselves and their family. For some families taking a holiday is difficult, so a cash grant may be given for outings or recreational activities.

The Family Fund may be able to help with other grants to help children and young people access play and leisure activities. Here are some things the Family Fund has been able to help pay for in the past:

- trampoline
- playstations and games
- TV and DVD players
- greenhouse
- sensory toys and equipment
- karate uniforms
- singing lessons.

**08449 744 099**

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

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

# Finding a holiday and travel insurance

## Airlines and airports

Information on the UK government website includes:

- how to get forms to tell airlines about incapacity and illness (usually from the airline website)
- how to get seats at reduced rates if you are accompanying a person with illness or disability, and
- services you can arrange to support your journey.

[www.gov.uk/transport-disabled/planes](http://www.gov.uk/transport-disabled/planes)

## Disabled Travel Advice (UK)

---

Advice on accessible travel in the UK and abroad, including holidays, disability-friendly camp sites, choosing airlines, travelling with pets, hiring motability scooters and adventure holidays. Has information about youth-hostelling with a disability and an 'ask the expert' service.

[www.disabledtraveladvice.co.uk](http://www.disabledtraveladvice.co.uk)

## Disabled Holiday Information (UK)

---

For travellers with all disabilities and mobility issues (not just wheelchair users). Information on accessible holiday accommodation, attractions and activities.

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

## Tourism for all (UK)

---

Tourism for All UK (TFA) is a charity website that has been developed as a one-stop-shop for information on accessible accommodation, holidays, attractions, days out, plus planning your

trip in the UK and overseas. Click on the TFA Directory for a list of services, like holiday charities, attractions and accommodation, care services, short breaks, oxygen suppliers and more. They also list travel insurance companies for people with disabilities.

**0845 124 9971**

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

## Open Britain (UK)

---

Open Britain is one-stop-shop to accessible places to stay in UK, online.

[www.openbritain.net](http://www.openbritain.net)

## Visit England

---

Tips and advice on holiday travel in England for people with access needs.

[www.visitengland.org](http://www.visitengland.org)

## National Autistic Society (UK)

---

Provides information on autism-friendly holidays and days out on their website, including planning your break. Search for 'holidays and days out' on their website.

**Autism freephone helpline:**

**0808 800 4104**

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

## 3H Fund (UK)

---

Provides subsidised group holidays for physically disabled children and adults and respite for their carers. When funds are available, they can give grants to families throughout the UK living on low incomes.

**01892 860 207**

[www.3hfund.org.uk](http://www.3hfund.org.uk)





### **Speyside Trust Badaguish Centre (Scotland)**

Short breaks activity holidays for children and adults with learning and multiple disabilities. They offer a wide choice of outdoor activities, such as canoeing, walking, biking and archery, to suit all levels of ability. Children can enjoy and discover new skills and abilities in the care of a qualified team.

**01479 861 285**

**[www.badaguish.org](http://www.badaguish.org)**

### **National Holiday Fund for Sick and Disabled Children (UK)**

Provides holidays to Florida for severely ill or disabled children aged eight to 18 years whose need for medical care prevents them going far from home. Holidays are arranged for small groups of children – all with compatible needs. Doctors, nurses, paramedics and carers are appointed to each group depending on need.

**01493 731 235**

**[www.nhfcharity.co.uk](http://www.nhfcharity.co.uk)**

### **Holiday Homes Trust (UK)**

Offers holiday accommodation around the UK catering to a wide range of needs for families with a disabled member. The Trust's caravans and chalet are wheelchair accessible, inside and out. Holidays are reasonably priced. See the website for discounts and special offers.

**0208 433 7290 or 0208 433 7291**

**[www.holidayhomestrust.org](http://www.holidayhomestrust.org)**

### **Holidays for All (UK)**

A group of accessible holiday providers offering leisure activities and accommodation in the UK and abroad. For people with sensory and physical impairments, their friends and families.

**01485 543000**

**[www.holidaysforall.org](http://www.holidaysforall.org)**

### **Ski 2 Freedom (UK)**

Encourages snow-sport and mountain activities for disabled children and adults. Ski 2 Freedom offers comprehensive information on everything from disability ski equipment and clothing, to help with planning mountain and winter sports activities in locations worldwide.

**0844 855 2302**

**[www.ski2freedom.com](http://www.ski2freedom.com)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Wish-granting charities

These charities offer special treats or holidays for children who are very ill or are living with severe disabilities. The charities listed below cover the whole of the UK but have different eligibility criteria, so you will need to check with them directly for more information.

### Make a Wish Foundation (UK)

---

Make a Wish grants 'once-in-a-lifetime' wishes of children aged three to 17 who have life-threatening conditions. Parents, professionals, or the child themselves can request a wish.

**01276 40 50 60**

**[www.make-a-wish.org.uk](http://www.make-a-wish.org.uk)**



### Starlight Children (UK)

---

Grants the wishes of seriously and terminally-ill children aged four to 18. Put on parties, pantomimes, fun centres, distraction boxes and entertainment for children in hospitals and hospices. Anyone can refer a child for a wish.

**020 7262 2881**

**[www.starlight.org.uk](http://www.starlight.org.uk)**

### Dreams Come True Charity (UK)

---

Fulfills 'dreams' for children and young adults from two to 21 years of age who are living with a life-threatening, or long-term illness. Anyone can nominate a child for a 'dream'.

**Freephone: 0800 018 6013**

**[www.dctc.org.uk](http://www.dctc.org.uk)**

### Happy Days Children's Charity (UK)

---

Funds and organises holidays, residential trips, days out and theatre trips throughout the UK for disadvantaged young people aged 3 to 17 years who have severe mental and physical disabilities and life-limiting illnesses. Parents can apply on the website, or phone for an application form.

**01582 755 999**

**[www.happydayscharity.org](http://www.happydayscharity.org)**

### When You Wish Upon a Star (UK)

---

Aims to fulfill wishes for children aged 2 to 16 years who have a life-threatening or terminal illness. Parents or medical professionals can apply on a child's behalf.

**0115 979 1720**

**[www.whenyouwishuponastar.org.uk](http://www.whenyouwishuponastar.org.uk)**

## Equipment and mobility

Read our guide to Aids, equipment and adaptations for more in-depth information and advice on mobility.

For help in choosing the right equipment or for information about getting around, the following organisations are useful:

### **British Red Cross (UK)**

---

Has a volunteer-led medical equipment service that provides wheelchair hire and short-term loans of equipment in almost 1,000 outlets in the UK.

**0844 871 11 11**

**[www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)**

### **Disabled Living Foundation (UK)**

---

Has a range of factsheets on choosing daily living equipment. This includes advice on equipment for children who need help to dress, with personal care (toileting, bathing, washing), and beds and bed accessories. The factsheets can be downloaded from the website or you can ring the equipment helpline for up-to-date product and supplier information. They also have a website, SARA (Self Assessment, Rapid Access), [www.asksara.org.uk](http://www.asksara.org.uk) with information on products that may help.

**0300 999 0004**

**[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)**

### **MERU (London Surrey Sussex Kent)**

---

MERU designs and manufactures specialised equipment for children and young people with disabilities. Has a 'Try before you fly' service offering advice for

flying with a disabled child, where you can try out travel chairs and harnesses, and a hire service for supported seating. Also has travel tips for parents.

**01372 725 203**

**[www.meru.org.uk](http://www.meru.org.uk)**

### **Disability Rights UK**

---

Has a National Key Scheme (NKS) offering independent access to 9,000 locked public toilets around the UK plus an accompanying NKS guide. The NKS scheme is available as an iPhone app.

**<http://disabilityrightsuk.org/>**

### **The Disabled Motorists Federation (UK)**

---

Has a range of information about travel around the UK and abroad.

**[www.disabledmotoristsfederation.org.uk](http://www.disabledmotoristsfederation.org.uk)**

### **PIE (UK)**

---

PIE specialises in maps for disabled people and produces a Blue Badge Atlas which has access information for towns, across the UK. Their website also has other products for Blue Badge holders.

**[www.thepieguide.com](http://www.thepieguide.com)**

### **GOV.UK**

---

This official website has information for disabled people on using different types of transport.

**[www.gov.uk/transport-disabled](http://www.gov.uk/transport-disabled)**

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

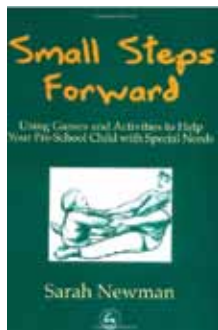
## Books to help your child play

The books below are available to buy on the internet (where you will find lots of other suggestions), and can be ordered in your local bookshop, or by contacting the publishers.

### *Small Steps Forward – Using Games and Activities to help your pre-school child with Special needs*

Sarah Newman,  
(Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

Lots of ideas for games and activities for pre-school children.



### *Autism, Play and Social Interaction*

Lone Gammeltoft and Marianne Sollok Nordenhof (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

Explains how to help children with autism spectrum disorders engage in interactive play.

How to set up play environments, games schedules and play routines, and how to use visual aids and other props to facilitate co-operative play.



### *Play for Children with Special Needs, Supporting children with learning differences 3–9*

Christine Macintyre,  
(Routledge, 2009)

A book on the benefits of play and includes different scenarios to show how to support children to play.



### *Fun with Messy Play - Ideas and Activities for Children with Special Needs*

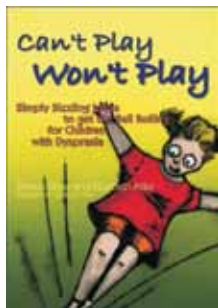
Tracey Beckerleg  
(Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

Activity book using everyday 'messy' materials like baked beans, condensed milk, jelly or glue. Helps improve co-ordination, communicative and cognitive abilities, as well as self-esteem and social skills.



### *Can't Play Won't Play – Simply Sizzling Ideas to get the Ball Rolling for Children with Dyspraxia*

Sharon Drew and Elizabeth Atter,  
(Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

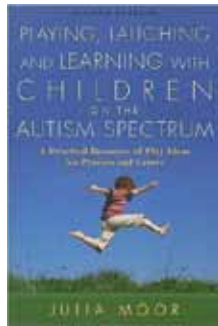




***Playing, Laughing and Learning with Children on the Autism Spectrum - A Practical Resource of Play Ideas for Parents and Carers***

Julia Moor (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

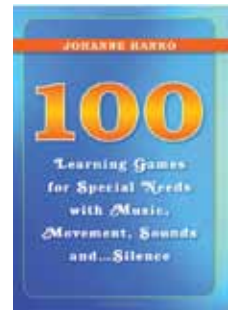
Shows how to break down activities into manageable stages, and ways to gain a child's attention and build on small achievements. Each chapter covers a theme, including music, art, physical activities, playing outdoors, puzzles, turn-taking and using existing toys to create play sequences.



***100 Learning Games for Special Needs with Music, Movement, Sounds and... Silence***

Johanne Hanko (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

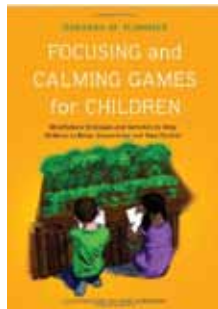
Inspiration and guidance for special education teachers, assistants, parents and carers on how to use lively play ideas to foster learning. Targets skills such as listening, self-awareness, movement, creative thinking and relaxation.



***Focusing and Calming Games for Children: Mindfulness Strategies and Activities to Help Children to Relax, Concentrate and Take Control***

Deborah M. Plummer (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

Games and activities to help children to focus, concentrate, and stay calm. Has a theory section, and a host of games and activities suitable for use with groups or individual children aged 5–12. Ideas for adaptation for children with attention and concentration difficulties are included.



***Party Planning for Children and Teens on the Autism Spectrum – How to Avoid Meltdowns and Have Fun!***

Kate E. Reynolds (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)

What can cause anxiety for children on the autism spectrum plus practical solutions. Covers party invitations, prizes, food and venues, with activities for age groups 2-8, 9-12 and teenagers.



Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Your child's rights to protection against discrimination

In England, Wales and Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 gives protection against disability discrimination in several areas, including service providers, who provide goods, facilities and services. This would cover, for example:

- hotel accommodation
- cinemas
- leisure centres
- parks
- railway stations
- holiday clubs, and
- after-school activities.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for service providers to discriminate against disabled people and treat them less favourably because they are disabled. The Act includes a legal duty on service providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to allow a disabled person to use their services.

This means service providers must take positive steps to make sure disabled people can access their services in a way that is as close as reasonably possible to the access enjoyed by non-disabled people. What is considered a 'reasonable adjustment' for a large organisation may be different to a 'reasonable adjustment' for a small organisation.

The Act also gives protection from harassment and victimisation. If you think your child is being harassed or bullied, please call our freephone helpline for



a copy of our *Guide to dealing with bullying: for parents of disabled children*.

In Northern Ireland, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the subsequent Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006, gives protection from disability discrimination in the supply of goods, facilities and services. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires public bodies to have due regard to promote equality, so there is a legal duty to have due regard for people with disabilities.

### **Need advice about your rights?**

If you feel that your child has been discriminated against when trying to use play and leisure facilities then ring our freephone helpline. We can also advise you on any other aspect of your rights and about any support that might be available – like grants to pay for activities or holidays.

# Your child's rights across the UK

## England

In England, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 means local authorities need to take more responsibility to make fun and positive activities available for all young people.

Also, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a framework to support the welfare, learning and development of children from birth to five years old. The Early Years Foundation Stage promotes teaching and learning through play.

## Short breaks in England

In England, the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 puts a legal duty on local authorities to provide a range of short breaks services for local disabled children.

As part of this duty, local authorities have to produce a 'Short Breaks Services Statement'. This statement should include information on:

- what local short break services are available
- how the services are designed to meet the needs of carers in their area, and
- details of any eligibility criteria the local authority applies to short breaks services.

The local authority must publish their short breaks services statement, including having a copy of the statement on their website. See [www.gov.uk/government/publications/short-breaks-for-carers-of-disabled-children](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/short-breaks-for-carers-of-disabled-children).

## Changes to the law in England

From September 2014, local authorities in England will be required to publish a 'local offer'. A local offer is intended to provide information about what it expects to be available to children with special educational needs and disabilities in their area, including leisure activities and childcare. Local offers should be available on your local authority website when they have been published. This should start to happen from September 2014.

## Scotland

### Local authority duties to disabled children

Services for disabled children are available under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Scotland) Act 1972 and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

The Early Years Framework in Scotland stresses the importance of play in improving children's quality of life, including the need to remove any barriers to play as a priority. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland. GIRFEC highlights the opportunity to take part in play, recreation and sport, which helps healthy growth and development at home and in the community.

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

Underpinning the GIRFEC approach and the Early Years Framework, The Scottish Government's National Play Strategy (June 2013) aims to improve the play experiences of all children and young people including those with disabilities.

The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 came into effect on 1 April 2014. Self-directed support (SDS) allows people to make an informed choice as to how their social care support is provided. By giving people control over their individual budget the SDS can be used flexibly. It can be taken as a cash payment (Direct Payment), allocated to a provider the individual chooses, the individual can opt for a local authority arranged service or you could choose a mix of these options.

By using Direct Payments individuals could employ their own staff to accompany them to leisure activities or SDS can be used for a short break.

### **Short breaks in Scotland**

The Scottish Government has pledged to prioritise improvements and greatly increase numbers of short breaks for all age groups. They have given specific funding for short breaks to be distributed through key voluntary organisations. The emphasis is on flexibility and choice giving disabled children, young people and their families greater control over their child's care.

If you are unsure what is happening in your area, contact your local social services department and ask what help is available.

### **Wales**

Under the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010, local authorities have a legal duty to secure enough play opportunities for children, and must take into account disabled children's needs.

Play in Wales is the Welsh government's play policy.

### **Short breaks in Wales**

The Welsh Government included short breaks as a key issue in 'We are on the Way: A Policy Agenda to Transform the lives of Disabled Children and Young People'. There is a legal duty on local authorities in Wales to provide short breaks under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (Wales) Regulations 2012, which came into force on 28 June 2012.

### **Changes to the law in Wales**

In Wales the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 proposes changes to social care. The Act was enacted on May 1 2014. It is expected that the codes of practice that follow the Act will require local authorities in Wales to recognise the importance of holidays and short breaks in their preventative service provision. Although the Act has been passed by government, its measures are not expected to come into force until 2016.



## Northern Ireland

### Local authority duties to disabled children

Services for disabled children are available under The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's (Northern Ireland) Act 1978.

The Northern Ireland Executive has a Play and Leisure Implementation Plan which is based on inclusion, integration and accessibility.

The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister coordinates the progress by local councils responsible for leisure facilities to monitor implementation of the plan.

## Short breaks in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the consultation on 'Transforming Your Care', the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety's (DHSSPSNI) review of health and social care services, including short-breaks services has recently been completed. Plans are underway to implement changes based on these findings.

Freephone helpline **0808 808 3555**  
**[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**



## **Making play and leisure work for disabled children**

### **Campaigning for better leisure services**

Parent carers now have an opportunity to have a say on commissioning play and leisure services through parent carer forums. For example, in Hull, the parent carer forum helped the local authority improve play facilities for disabled children in the local park.

To find your local parent carer forum in England, see the Parent Carer Participation pages on our website at [www.cafamily.org.uk/pcpresources](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/pcpresources)

You may also wish to contact some of the following campaigning organisations:

### **Every Disabled Child Matters – England**

---

Campaigning organisation to get rights and justice for every disabled child and their family, including play and leisure.

**020 7843 6448**

**[www.edcm.org.uk](http://www.edcm.org.uk)**

To find out how you can campaign, see [www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx](http://www.edcm.org.uk/resources.aspx) and look for 'Going Places' in Resources for supporters.

### **Parent Carers Council On Disability Northern Ireland**

---

A charity of parents/carers who have joined together to have their say about services which affect their children, young people and adults with disabilities. They take the views and concerns of parents/carers to service providers to improve services.

**07713475997**

**<http://pccd-ni.webs.com/>**

### **For Scotland's Disabled Children (fSDC)**

---

fSDC works to secure rights and justice for disabled children in Scotland – you can get involved with their campaigns and help change services for the better. c/o Contact a Family Scotland

**0131 659 2939**

**[www.fsd.org.uk](http://www.fsd.org.uk)**

## Social networking

Contact a Family is on Facebook and Twitter. Join us at:

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/contactafamily](http://www.facebook.com/contactafamily)

### Twitter

[www.twitter.com/contactafamily](http://www.twitter.com/contactafamily)

### Podcasts

To listen to and download our podcasts click the iTunes link on the bottom of our website homepage:  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)

### Videos

You can watch videos on our YouTube channel at:  
[www.youtube.com/cafamily](http://www.youtube.com/cafamily)

## Support Contact a Family

Help us continue to provide information, advice and support to ALL families with disabled children in the UK.

From cake sales, to running the London Marathon, or signing up to be a regular giver – there are many ways you can help.

Find out more on our website at  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/fundraising)

Call our fundraising team on 020 7608 8786, or email [fundraising@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@cafamily.org.uk)

Or why not get involved in our campaign work across the UK? Visit [www.cafamily.org.uk/influencing](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/influencing)

Your support will ensure we're there for families now and in the future.

## References

1. *Hello! Are you Listening* by Pippa Murray, (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002).
2. *Everybody Here? Play and Leisure for Disabled Children and Young People*, (Contact a Family, 2002).
3. *Come on In! Developing Inclusive Play and Leisure Services* Action for Children and Contact a Family West Midlands, 2003

Revised and updated by Shahnaz Qizilbash and Karin Beeler  
Original text by Philomena Murphy and Clare Kassa



## Getting in contact with us

### Free helpline for parents and families

**0808 808 3555**

Open Mon–Fri, 9.30am–5pm

Access to over 170 languages

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

**[www.makingcontact.org](http://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](mailto:info@cafamily.org.uk)**

Web: **[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**

## Other information booklets available

This guide is one of a series produced for parents and groups concerned with the care of disabled children including:

- *Fathers (UK)*
- *Understanding your child's behaviour (UK)*
- *Grandparents (UK)*
- *Siblings (UK)*
- *Aids, equipment and Adaptations*
- *The tax credits guide (UK)*
- *The NHS and caring for a disabled child (England)*

All our guides can be downloaded from our website **[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)**  
Parent carers can call our freephone helpline and ask for a copy of any of our guides.

Registered Office: 209–211 City Road, 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.

® Contact a Family is a registered trade mark.  
Although great care has been taken in the compilation and preparation of this guide to ensure accuracy, Contact a Family cannot take any responsibility for any errors or omissions. The photographs in this guide do not relate to any personal accounts.

Order code i11