



Parent Carers of Children with Disabilities

**JUNE
2005**

The job of 'Parent' is not easy, but when your child has special needs and difficulties – whether it is physical, emotional, behaviour or learning; this holds a whole new challenge.

We define Parent Carers as those parents who are caring for children with additional care needs, e.g. families with children with physical, emotional, behavioural, or learning difficulties. As a parent you may often meet a variety of professionals, all looking at the needs of your child, or young person. At the Care Network we are here to look at **your** needs and to support **you**.

What we offer Parent Carers

Carers Support Workers can provide individual information and support for your caring situation. The 'Carers Line' is available for you to talk through any problems and queries. Our quarterly newsletter will help keep you in touch with local and national news. We can provide information and support on access to learning, training, or work opportunities. It is possible for Carers to access our 'Carers Opportunity Fund' which offers help towards the cost of any learning and training you might wish to take up. We also have an online computer for Carers to use at our office in Radstock (you will need to book a time slot).

STATUTORY SERVICES:

Social Services Disabled Children's Team

Offer a full range of services and support for families who have children with disabilities. Families with disabled children are entitled to two assessments, a '*Child in Need Assessment*' under the Children's Act 1989 and a '*Carers Assessment*' under the Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000. These assessments will determine what services or package of support may be offered.

To contact the Team call the Duty Worker on ☎ **01225 825307**.

Single Point of Entry System

This ensures children are referred quickly, to the correct specialists and therapist. A referral can be made by a social worker, teacher, health visitor or General Practitioner, using a referral form.

This form is then checked and either forwarded to a specific department, or if the referral is for more than one department it is taken to an intake team. Here the child's needs are discussed and the referral is signposted to the relevant departments and the family contacted for an appointment.

Carers line (01761) 431389

Mon – Thur 9.00am – 11.00am and 1.00pm – 3.00pm

Friday 9.00am – 11.00am

Email: carerssupport@thecarenetwork.co.uk

www.thecarenetwork.co.uk

EDUCATION SERVICE

If your child has difficulties at school, (or Pre-School) it may be possible to gain extra support for them. The school, an educational psychologist and any other professional who may be involved with your child, need to carry out an assessment, from which a Statement of Special Educational Need is written. This highlights what the difficulties are and what support should be offered. Sometimes this whole process can be very stressful and difficult, but there is support available e.g. an Independent Parental Support Service.

Independent Parental Support Service

This service runs a telephone helpline which offers information and support to parents on various educational issues including; SEN, school admissions, exclusions and bullying. There is also a group of volunteers who can support Parent/Carers personally when considering their child's Special Educational Needs. Contact the service coordinator

☎ 01225 394382

Parent Partnership Coordinator

Offers impartial advice and assistance to parents on any educational issue. On a strategic level, the coordinator seeks parents' views on various educational services, and ensures parental input into policy and practice. Also monitors the Independent Parental Support Service.

☎ 01225 394294

TRANSITION

Connexions West of England

Work with *all* young people to look at future opportunities. There are Connexions Advisors who work specifically with young people with special needs and can offer information about future provision for people with disabilities. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs a Connexions Advisor should automatically attend the transition review following your child's 14th birthday. This is when a *transition plan* is prepared, which sets out possibilities for your child's future.

☎ 01225 461501

www.connexionswest.org.uk

WORK LIFE BALANCE

As your children get older, you may wish to go back to work - if you are working age - or at least look at other options for yourself; further training, starting a new hobby, or just learning new things for fun.

However, it is often difficult to this in a way that fits around your caring commitment. You may find it helpful to meet with someone who can look at these options with you. 'nextstep' is there to help people make informed choices about learning and work. They have information on various courses and can also offer support to people who are thinking of returning to work.

☎ 01225 461501

www.nextstepwest.org.uk

OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PARENT CARERS

There are various other services and organisations that support families with disabled children locally. Some of these are listed here; however a more comprehensive source is *the Rainbow Resource Guide* available from the Family Information Service or the Care Network.

Face to Face

Offers support and befriending for families who have just learned of their child's disability or special need.

☎ **Shoron Amor 01225 350527**

e-mail: online@facetofacenetWORK.org.uk

Bath Opportunity Pre-school

Provides play opportunities and a range of therapies for disabled children and those with special educational needs, of pre-school age. It also enables parents to meet together and gain support from each other, along with staff and other professionals who work closely with the pre-school.

☎ **01225 462094**

Family Information Service

Provides information and advice on services and support for all families throughout B&NES; including provision for disabled children, access issues, national help-lines and local groups. The FIS also co-ordinate the Link Register (see below) and produces 'The Link' newsletter twice a year

Freephone: ☎ **0800 073 1214**

e-mail: fis@bathnes.gov.uk

website : www.childcarelink.gov.uk

The Link Register

This is a register of disabled children in B&NES, and is used as a planning tool by Social Services to look at needs and current resources for disabled children, registration is voluntary but those parents who have registered get a newsletter twice a year.

Barnardos

The family centre offers support for any family within the Norton Radstock area. They run a specific group for parents of disabled children, called Family First, which meets monthly. ☎ **01761 410413**
<http://services.barnardos.org.uk/nortonradstock/>

The Hut

The Hut is run by Bath Area Play Project and is situated in Twerton. It has a Light Sensory Room and a Soft Play Area, suitable for children with a range of disabilities. They run various play schemes and activities for disabled children throughout the year. The Hut is also available for hire for parties and other activities. There is also a toy library available for children aged 0-16 years. ☎ **01225 313946**

Off the Record

Have two dedicated Young Carers Workers, who offer support to young people who are caring for someone else.

They can be contacted on the young person's freephone ☎ **0800 389551**

(Midsomer Norton office) ☎ **01761 414100**

SCOPE

Provides support for families with children, individuals and professionals involved with Cerebral Palsy. They have a field workers nationwide

National Helpline: ☎ 0808 8003333

National Autistic Society

Supports families with children with Autism and Aspergers syndrome, through local branches. The NAS Bath Branch runs two Out of School clubs for children and teenagers with Aspergers Syndrome

☎ **0117 9748400**

They also hold regular parent support group meetings – for further information contact :

Andrew Judge on ☎ 0117 373 7478

SHORT BREAK SERVICES

Short break services are designed to be flexible and offer a variety of services for families. This can range from the opportunity for the child to join in social activities with a Carer for a few hours, to overnight respite. There are various short break services available; this can be within your family home, away from your home or away from your home with a respite Carer, or at a small respite unit. Many of these short break services come from the assessment carried out by Social Services. We can advise parents on these.

Beaumonts

Offers an overnight residential service for children with moderate to severe learning difficulties, with associated physical disability. Referrals are made only through the Disabled Children's Team.

Family Link Scheme

A short breaks service offering outreach, day care and overnight respite for families with children with disabilities. Referrals are made only through the Social Worker, usually from the Disabled Children's Team.

☎ 01225 395332

Crossroads Care

Provides regular planned breaks, usually up to three hours per session, during the day, evening or at weekends; using carefully selected and trained staff. The service is reliable, flexible and tailored to the families needs. At the moment referrals are made through the Disabled Children's Team.

☎ 01761 436673

Time 2 Share

A day time short breaks service which offers befriending and social support to young people with learning difficulties. Trained and vetted volunteers are carefully matched to the young person's need.

☎ 0117 9415868

GATEWAY CLUBS

Youth clubs for disabled and able-bodied children, to enable them to have a fuller social life, in a safe and supported environment.

Bath Junior Gateway Club

Wednesday 5.30pm – 7.30pm at
Centre 69 Pen Hill Road, Weston, Bath.

Contact Becky Morgan

☎ 01225 447643

e-mail:

becky@gateway69.freeserve.co.uk

Radstock Gateway Club

4 – 12 year olds (Tuesday 5.45pm – 7.15pm)

Radstock Youth Centre, Church Street,
Radstock

☎ 01761 437748

Bath Mencap & Gateway Sports Club

Thursday evenings at Bath Sports & Leisure Centre 6pm – 8pm

Contact Brian Downes

☎ 01225 742265

Keynsham & District Mencap Society

Run projects throughout the week ranging from youth groups to a range of sports clubs

☎ 0117 9865659

The Care Network, 1 Riverside Cottages, Radstock, Bath BA3 3PS
Office (01761) 431388 Carers Line (01761) 431389 Fax (01761) 431288
Email: carerssupport@thecarenetwork.co.uk
Company No 3289938 Charity No 1060080