

Caring | Children with disabilities



Neath Port Talbot
Castell-nedd Port Talbot
County Borough Council / Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Children with disabilities

a guide to help available to
parents and carers

August 2003

This leaflet is also available in Welsh, large print, Braille and on
tape or computer disk.
Phone 01639 873014 for copies.

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This leaflet describes the work that Social Services do with children under the age of fourteen. If you want to know about the work we do with young people to plan their transition to adulthood, ask for our leaflet ‘Nearly 14?’. If your child has visual or hearing impairment, ask for our leaflet, ‘Children with sensory impairments.’

Who do we work with?

The Social Services Child Care (Disability) Team work with children and young people with a range of disabilities, and some who might have more than one disability. Most of the young people we work with have

- severe learning disabilities; or
- both visual and hearing impairments; or
- severe or complex physical disabilities; or
- severe visual or hearing impairments; or
- any of these disabilities, where the family needs support.
- Autism ADHD (diagnosed)

How to access the service

Every family is different, and we try to be very flexible in the help that we give. Of course, many disabled children don't need any help from us at all. We may need to take the advice of a doctor (your GP or a specialist) to decide whether we will be able to help. Our daily social worker can be contacted during the times shown on the rear of this leaflet to find out more.

Child's Disability Record

Our Child Disability Record is a list of the numbers and needs of disabled children and their families which is kept so that we can continue to plan for services to meet your needs.

What do we do?

Our aim is to help your child get the most out of life within his or her local community. Social workers in our Child Care (Disability) Team can help you work out what kind of support and services your son or daughter may need now or in the future. We can advise you on what help is available from

- Social Services
- voluntary groups and parent support groups
- Schools and Colleges
- the Health Service
- the benefits Agency and organisations which give grants

The needs of your child will be assessed in partnership with yourselves and other organisations. Sometimes we hold meetings, to draw together all the relevant people and to avoid wasting your time by duplicating assessments and meetings. Together, we will draw up a plan to make sure you, your child and family get the services you need. The plan gets reviewed regularly if you are receiving support services.

One of our social workers will be named as your worker to make sure that the plan is carried out, and to give you any help or information that you need.

Also in our team are specialist staff who can provide other sorts of specialist help.

- **Specialist Health Visitor and Community Nurse** advice on health care relating to your child's disability, including advice on continence (for children aged two and a half or more) and nursing.
- **Portage** - work with parents of pre-school children, showing you how you can help develop your child's skills. (see separate leaflet)

Our team can also access specialist support for problems such as behavioural difficulties.

- **Facing the Challenge** offers a service for children with Learning Difficulties.
- **Parenting Matters** offers a number of services to families to address issues like behavioural problems.

Giving you a break

It's important for any parent to have a break from child care, to give you a chance to have time to yourself. If appropriate, we can arrange for you to have help from these services:

- **Community childminding service** - we can provide free childminding in times of emergency or crisis.
- **Family Link** - you and your child are linked with another family who will take time to get to know you and your family and offer you regular breaks. Your child may spend a few hours at a time with the Link Family, or stay overnight.
- **Respite Care** - to give you a short break, we may arrange for your child to stay at Ty Laura or Ty Hapus, which specialise in short-break care.
- **Play and Leisure Service (PALS)** - a project supported by NCH Cymru which provides workers to give a few hours' support to help children and young people access leisure opportunities.
- **Childminders** - if you want to arrange your child care, we can give you a list of all local registered and inspected childminders. Some of them have experience of working with children with disabilities.
- **Family centres**, Playgroups, parenting classes, outreach workers (young families and teenagers) are other services we could provide if appropriate.

Education

All local schools have some pupils with statements of special educational needs, and have experience in providing the best education for them. Most children with special educational needs go to their local school, but some with statements might go to school with specialist classes or to a special school, depending on their needs.

The Local Educational Authority (LEA) may get involved with children who have severe and complex disabilities from the age of two onwards.

Special Educational Needs Liaison Officers answer queries, do visits and explain procedures. Contact the Special Educational Needs team on 01639 763333. Ask them for their information pack which tells you

- what help is available at school and before school
- the LEA policy on special education needs
- how the system of referrals and assessments works
- how you can make sure you have your say in your child's education
- the meaning of the terms that were used.

For **independent advice and support** on issues to do with education, you may like to contact the Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP Cymru). Phone them on **01792 457305**.

01639 632192.

Health Services

The Child Care (Disability) Team has close links with health staff workers. These all include your GP and other practice staff, and also specialist staff.

Senior clinical medical officers link regularly with the team. They may be called in by your GP or family health visitor to do some special assessments if your child's development is causing concern.

One of these Health Staff may refer pre-school children and their families to the Children's Centre at Neath Port Talbot Hospital. The Centre is a base for a range of multi-disciplinary clinics offering advice on subjects such as Feeding and Diet, Speech and Language, Communication Disorders, Orthopedics and Epilepsy. The centre also houses a playgroup.

Benefits and grants

We do not give out money ourselves, but we can advise you on where to go for help if needed or help you to apply. Some of the benefits which you or your child might qualify for are:-

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - this may include money for care and mobility (over 3 years of age).
- Income support - can be claimed along with certain other benefits.
- Invalid Care Allowance - paid to people who care for someone who receives the higher or middle rates of the care component of DLA.

You can also get information on disability benefits by phoning the free **Benefits Enquiry Line on 0800 882200**. If your child is aged two or over, you may be able to get a Blue Parking Badge to use when he or she is travelling in your car.

The Family Fund Trust offers financial help to families of children with severe disabilities, e.g. for holidays, play equipment or household appliances. Contact them at PO Box 50, York, YO1 9ZX.

We can give you information on other trusts and grant-giving organisations.

Local support groups and projects

You might like to contact the groups below, which offer support and activities for children with disabilities and their families.

- **Interplay** works with children from 0-19, offering integrated play and leisure activities after school, at weekends and during school holidays. Contact them on 01792 467353.
- **Special Needs Activity Club (SNAC) based in Taibach, Port Talbot** gives children with disabilities a chance to play, frolic in a ball pool or spend time in the sensory stimulation room.

	Address
Hours of opening	SNAC
Monday to Friday	Lady Charlotte House
5.00 pm to 8.00 pm	Margam
Saturday	Port Talbot
1.00 pm to 5.00 pm	SA13 2BL

It is advisable to telephone SNAC before a school holiday period, as the opening hours may change to the afternoon.

- Brothers and sisters are welcome too.
Phone 01639 899666 for more information.

More information

There are many more local and national organisations, which offer support and give information. Ask us for more information or leaflets.

You can also ask Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service for information on local voluntary groups. Phone them on 01639 631246.

Ask us for any of the following leaflets:

- Nearly 14? information for young people with disabilities and their parents
- Children with sensory impairments
- The Child Disability Record
- Your right to complain
- Portage

How to contact us

Phone, write or call in person to:-

Child Care (Disability Team)

The Laurels, 87, Lewis Rd, Neath SA11 1DJ

01639 765400

Monday to Thursday

8.45 am to 12.30 & 1.30 to 5 pm

Friday

8.45 am to 12.30 & 1.30 to 4.30 pm

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