

Caring | Children with sensory impairments



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

SS/CI03/01/E

Children with Sensory Impairments

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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If your child has a sensory impairment, you are entitled to help and Support from Social Services, Education and the Health Service. This leaflet tells you about the work we do with children who are:

- **visually impaired** - this could mean that they are partially sighted or blind
- **hearing impaired** - this could mean that they are deaf or hard of hearing
- **deafblind** - this means that their sight and hearing are both impaired - sometimes called dual sensory impairment

This leaflet describes the help available from us, and lists other organisations which you might like to get in touch with for advice and support.

It is mainly about the work we do with young children; as your child gets older, we can give you more information about what help is available then.

How Social Service can help

Child Care (Disability) Team

Social Services Child Care (Disability) Team works in partnership with you to plan and co-ordinate support and services for your child.

If your child has a significant impairment, you may find that you need some advice and additional help for your child.

Times that can be especially difficult may include:

- the diagnosis of your child's impairment;
- a child's first nursery placement, school placement or change of school;
- accessing and participating in ordinary social activities in the community;
- the transition from school to adulthood.

In partnership with you we can help identify what kind of support and services your child and family may need.

- We can help you to access specialist services you may require and services available to all children in Health, Education and Social Services.
- We can put you in touch with other parents, parent support groups and local voluntary projects which offer a varied range of valuable support and services.
- We can loan you literature and videos which may be of

assistance to you.

- We will assist you to plan how to meet your child's and family's individual needs. You will be helped by a named worker from the team who will have special responsibility for your plan and will give you information on what is available.
- We can help you to check that your plan is working out through regular reviews.
- We will encourage you to get involved in developing the services we offer, making sure they are good quality, that they deliver what you want and that any gaps in services are highlighted.

Specialist workers

Staff in the Child Care (Disability) Team co-work with specialist workers who give extra help and advice as needed. These are social workers who also work with adults who have sensory disabilities, and may have continuing contact in the future as your child becomes an adult.

The Social workers for Visual Impairment and the social workers with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People can give you information, advice and practical assistance to do with:

- registration as Blind or Partially Sighted
- registration as Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- welfare benefits advice
- communication issues
- advocacy

- employment issues
- getting in touch with contact and support groups, clubs, local and national organisations
- charities and grants
- equipment provision

Education

The Council has specialist education staff who work with you and your child before and during their school years. Education may begin as soon as your child is diagnosed as having an impairment.

Children with visual impairment

The support of the qualified and experienced staff of the Visually Impaired Service is available to all children who have a moderate to severe or profound visual disability.

The service supports pre-school and school age visually impaired children, their families and teachers.

Once your child has been diagnosed as having a visual impairment, your Consultant, Ophthalmologist or staff from the Community Child Health Department may ask us for support. Teachers in schools, Social Services and you as parents can also get in touch with us. Nobody can ask us to help your child without your permission.

The support offered at the pre-school stage includes:

- advice on suitable toys and equipment
- visual enhancement skills
- helping the child with little or no sight
- addresses of support groups
- advice on colour contrast
- working towards independence skills
- information relating to your child's future education.

The support your child gets depends on the eye condition and its effect on your child's progress at school.

If your child has problems moving around independently, our Mobility and Orientation Officer can work with you to teach your child how to get around safely.

Children with hearing impairment

The support of the qualified and experienced staff of the Hearing Impaired Service is available to all children who have a significant degree of hearing impairment.

The service supports pre-school and school age hearing impaired children, their families and teachers.

Once your child has been diagnosed as having a hearing impairment, your ENT Consultant, Audiologist or staff from the Community Child Health Department may ask us for support. Teachers in schools, Social Services and you as parents can also get in touch with us. Nobody can ask us to help your child without permission.

The support offered at the pre-school age includes:

- advice on support groups
- information relating to your child's future education
- individual programmes to encourage auditory training
- hearing aid management
- communication skills.

The support your child gets at school depends on the severity of the hearing loss and the development of his or her language and communication skills.

An audio technician visits hearing impaired children regularly to provide advice on the management of radio aids and hearing aids. The audio technician also tests that the equipment is working efficiently.

Children who are deafblind / multi-sensory impaired

People with multi-sensory impairment have combined visual and hearing loss. They are rarely completely deaf or blind. Some have additional disabilities or medical problems.

Ysgol Hendre Deafblind Centre in Bryncoch is the only specialist centre for multi-sensory impaired pupils in Wales. It is recognised as a centre of excellence by Sense, the charity for multi-sensory impaired people at Birmingham University.

The Centre offers:

- A staff to pupil ratio of one to one
- A consistent routine to the day and week
- Sensory stimulation and training
- Specialist teaching methods including the use of alternative methods of communication.

A specialist environment with lights rooms, music room, soft play areas and a sensort playground.

Ysgol Hendre Deafblind Centre takes pupils between the ages of 2 to 19. They can attend Ysgol Hendre Deafblind Centre on assessment or permanent placements. Pupils come from throughout Wales. For more information please contact:

Heather Reid
Co-ordinator
Pupil Inclusion (SEN)
Civic Centre
Port Talbot
SA13 1PJ
01639 763333

Esther Thomas
Learning Support Manager
Ysgol Hendre
Education Centre
Main Road
Bryncoch
Neath
SA10 71Y
01639 637550

Health

Once your child has been diagnosed as having a hearing or visual impairment, he or she will be seen by a number of different health professionals offering help with medical or practical aspects of the impairment. If your child has a dual impairment, he or she will be in touch with two sets of staff, one specialising in sight and the other in hearing.

Your child will have regular visits to a **Consultant** at the hospital. The Consultant will check on the clinical aspects of your child's impairment.

At the hospital, your child will also visit the **Audiologist** (hearing technician) or the **Orthoptist** (vision technician). They may supply equipment to help your child's hearing or vision, advise on its use, and sort out problems.

As well as the hospital, your G.P. remains the primary carer of your child for all health matters. The family Health Visitor will also see your child regularly to screen his or her development before he or she starts school.

Your child will also be seen by a **Community Paediatrician** who has a designated role for children with hearing/visual impairment. The role of the Community Paediatrician is:

- to monitor your child's hearing/vision within the community in conjunction with the hospital
- to assess the development of your child at appropriate times, particularly just before starting school, and to monitor school progress.

- to refer and liaise with other agencies such as Education and Social Services and to liaise with the hospital of any difficulties that arise in the community.
- to provide medical advice to the Education Authority when considering the educational needs of your child and throughout their school life.
- to provide advice to parents when they wish it on any matters as above.

Community Paeditricians are part of the Community Child Health Service based at:

The Children's Centre
Neath Port Talbot Hospital
Baglan Way Port Talbot
Tel: 01639 862713

Support Groups - general

Family Fund Trust

Run by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It offers financial help to families of children with special needs, e.g. for holidays, play equipment and household appliances.

PO Box 50,
York
YO1 2ZX
Tel: 01904 621115

Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP)

SNAP gives you independent advice and information to parents of children with special needs. It helps parents to become partners with professionals in decisions about their children's education.

43 Alfred Street
Neath
SA11 1TH
Tel: 01639 632192

Support Groups - visual impairment

RNIB Cymru

Offers advice and support on a wide range of issues

Trident Court
Eastmoors Road
Cardiff
CF24 5TD
Tel: 02920 450440

Wales Council for the Blind

General advice and support for visually impaired people.

3rd Floor,
Shand House,
20 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 ODB
Tel: 02920 473954
Fax: 02920 433920

The Vision Foundation (Family Resource Centre)

A centre which supports visually impaired children and young people up to the age of 18 and their families.

Vision House
4, Gwent Court,
Victoria Business Park,
Ebbw Vale,
Gwent,
NP3 6AN
Tel: 0145 309500

Support Groups - hearing impairment

National Deaf Children's Society

An organisation of families, parents and carers which offers advice and information of any aspect of deafness.

N.D.C.S. National Office,
15 Dufferin Street,
London EC1Y 8PD
Tel: 0207 4908656 (voice and text)
Regional Office: NCDS Wales,
Room 2 First Floor,
43 Charles Street,
Cardiff CF1 4EB
Tel: 02920 373474 (voice and fax)
Tel: 02920 384299 (text)

West Glamorgan Deaf Children's Society

A local group which provides support and advice for deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. Meetings are held monthly. Social events take place throughout the year and there is a parent's sign class. Swansea Central Library holds the groups and a collection of books and videos on all aspects of deafness.

Tel: Joanne Jones 01792 519502 (voice & text)

Royal National Institute for Deaf People

The RNID Provides a range of services and campaigns to raise awareness about the needs of deaf people.

R.N.I.D. (Cymru),
3rd Floor,
33-35 Cathedral Road,
Cardiff,
CF1 9HB
Tel: 02920 333034 (voice)
Tel: 02920 333035 (text)
Tel: 02920 333036 (fax)

British Deaf Association

An organisation run by deaf people to advance and protect the interests of deaf adults and children. For information on its policies, activities and local Deaf Clubs contact:

B.D.A. (Wales)
Shand House,
2 Fitzalan Place
Cardiff CF21 BD
Tel: 02920 302216 (voice)
Tel: 02920 302217 (text)
Tel: 02920 302218 (fax)

Support groups - deafblind

SENSE Cymru

Sense, is a national voluntary organisation supporting and campaigning for people who are deafblind, their carers and professionals who work with them. It was founded by parents and continues to provide family support.

Chair: Mrs. Hazel Benjamin
8 Forest View,
Cimla
Neath SA11 3RS
Tel: 01639 637115

Regional Office: 5 Raleigh Walk
Brigantine Place,
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff CF10 4LN
Tel: 02920 457461 (voice)
Tel: 02920 464125 (text)
Tel: 02920 499644 (fax)

Sense U.K.

11-13 Clifton Terrace,
Finsbury Park,
London N4 3SR
Tel: 0171 272 7774

Deafblind UK

An organisation offering links to services, information, advice to deafblind people, their families and professionals with the key aim of improving access and abilities.

100 Bridge Street,
Peterborough PE1 1DY
Tel: 01733 358100 (voice and text)
Helpline: 0800 132320

For more information, please contact:

Child Care (Disability) Team

The Laurels

87, Lewis Rd

Neath SA11 1DJ

Tel: 01639 765400

Fax: 01639 765417

Child Care (Disability) Opening Times

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

Disability Living Centre

8-10 The Courtyard

D'arcy Business Park

Llandarcy

Neath

SA10 6EJ

Tel: 01792 325430

Mini com: 01792 325425

Fax: 01792 325441



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