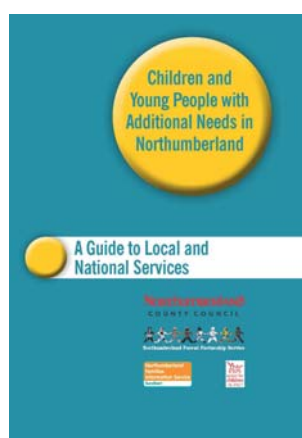




# Network Newsletter

Issue No. 16 April/May 2009

## Children and Young People with Additional Needs in Northumberland: A Guide to Local and National Services



The 2009 - 2010 edition of this guide is hot off the press! It lists some of the many services that can provide parents and carers with information, advice and support for meeting the needs of their child. The guide has been produced by Action for Children IN-PACT and the Northumberland Parent Partnership Service, with support from the Families Information Service and the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) team.

Phone **01670 857816** to order your **free** copy.

AIMING HIGH IN



NORTHUMBERLAND

## Aiming High for Disabled Children Parent Participation Events

On Saturday 21st March, 76 people turned out for the 'Dads Breakfast' at Cleaswell Hill School. The event was one of four participation events organised by INPACT as part of Aiming High for Disabled Children.

This is hopefully one of several events across the county where dads, granddads and other male carers can have the opportunity to be involved and have their voices heard.

There were certainly lots of good ideas put forward through a survey done on the day. Professional photographer John Watson was on hand to do family portraits and mums had a treat too - a beautician was on hand to do massage and nail art.



Carried on overleaf .....

Continued from front page .....

Other events included three pamper days for parents and carers in Wooler, Wansbeck and Hexham Mart. Therapies on offer included: Indian Head Massage, beauty therapies, make overs, waxing, tinting and acupuncture.

Therapists Claire, Suzy and Margaret worked non-stop at each of the three events. Mums, grandmas and foster carers went home suitably chilled out.

These events were targeted at families who might like to have a say about the planning and delivery of services to disabled children but don't know how.

"We have to find different ways of involving parents and carers" says Susan Cullingworth, INPACT Service Coordinator. "Not everyone feels comfortable to attend the locality meetings or Parent Carer and Professional Forum. The DCFS (Department of Children Schools and Families) are keen to ensure that parents are consulted and that their views help to shape services for the future".

For more information about Aiming High for

Disabled Children log onto [www.edcm.org.uk](http://www.edcm.org.uk)

or contact INPACT on 01670 857816.

disabled

Every Child Matters

## Cerebra

Cerebra, the National Charity for children with neurological or brain-related conditions has announced a big increase in their funding in 2009. They invite parents and carers of children aged 16 and under with brain-related conditions or injury to apply for one of three direct benefits:-

- ◆ The Cerebra Grants Scheme offers grants for items of direct benefit to the child.
- ◆ The Speech & language Therapy Voucher Scheme offers a voucher for up to £500 of therapy for children who have not had access to one-to-one or group speech therapy for 6 months or more.
- ◆ The Wills & Trusts scheme provides up to £350 towards the establishment of a will and/or discretionary trust by a qualified person.



For more details or to apply please contact them on 0800 328 1159, email [info@cerebra.org.uk](mailto:info@cerebra.org.uk) or via their website [www.cerebra.org.uk](http://www.cerebra.org.uk)

## Family Fund extra cuts shopping costs

The Family Fund has launched a new, free to join website. **Family Fund extra** gives families of disabled children and young people online discounts from leading high street names such as Comet, Argos, Haven Holidays and Stone Computers. Chief Executive Derek Walpole said "We are always looking for new ways for families with disabled children to keep their costs down. **Family Fund extra** will help make their money go further".

As well as offering reductions for disabled children's families, the fund also enables anyone at all to help disabled children while shopping online. Derek



Walpole explained "One click from the website takes you to Amazon, M & S and a hundred other sites. You pay the same and they give the Family Fund a small commission to help severely disabled children. Sign up and get shopping at [www.familyfundextra.org.uk](http://www.familyfundextra.org.uk)

## Good news for Young People aged 16 - 17

The Family Fund have been able to raise their age limits. They can now give grants for severely disabled young people up to age 17 in Scotland and Northern Ireland and up to 18 in England and Wales. Whilst they are happy for you to apply for the things they usually help with, such as holidays, washing machines, driving lessons, computers and hospital visiting costs, they would welcome alternative requests that are of particular help for your child at this time.

If you would like to talk to the Family Fund about an application for your 16 or 17 year old, please contact them by email at [policy@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:policy@familyfund.org.uk) or by phone on 01904 550037.

## Carers Opportunity Fund—Do you know about it?

This fund has been allocated from the Carers Grant to enable carers to take a break from their caring responsibilities. This can be accessed by those who are caring for adults, children and siblings. Carers can access up to £100 each year and it has been used for things like paying for accommodation costs for an overnight break, an evening out at the cinema or booking relaxation treatments.

If you would like information on how to access this grant, please call Carers Northumberland on 0844 8007354.

## Events for visually impaired children

Useful Vision are organising two events for their registered families.

Making Music Workshop for registered children, parents and carers.

Sunday 31st May 2009 10.30am—1.30pm at The Sage, Gateshead.

Come and have fun making music, singing and playing percussion instruments.

Calvert Trust Children's Outdoor Activity Day for registered children and their immediate siblings. It will take place on Saturday 27th June 9.30am—4.30pm at Calvert Trust, Kielder Water, Hexham. Activities include "king swing", climbing tower/zip wire, sailing, archery and canoeing.

Registration with Useful Vision is free.

For further details about Useful Vision or the events above,

please telephone 01434 682160 or email [info@usefulvision.org.uk](mailto:info@usefulvision.org.uk).



usefulvision

## Sporting events for young people with disabilities

The Northumberland Competition Managers, along with the County Sports Partnership and other partners are looking to develop opportunities for young people with disabilities to participate in boccia, swimming, archery, gymnastics and dance and, possibly, table tennis, cycling & badminton as well as athletics.

They are also looking at community and club links. There is a website:

[www.northumberlandcompetitionmanagers.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandcompetitionmanagers.co.uk) on which they shall be

developing disability sports links. They look forward to hearing from any young person with a disability who is interested in sports opportunities.

Please contact them so they can build up a data base of interested parties.

They also have a number of events planned:

- ♦ Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April from 10.30 - 2.00. Track and Field Athletics Taster and Talent ID Day for 12 to 19 year olds at Wentworth Leisure Centre, Hexham.
- ♦ Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May from 10.30 - 2.00. Sports Hall Athletics for Years 4, 5 and 6 at Willowburn Leisure Centre, Alnwick
- ♦ Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May from 10.00 - 1.00. Swimming "take part and talent ID Gala" for 8 to 19 year olds at Willowburn Leisure Centre, Alnwick
- ♦ Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Track and Field Regional Championships for 12 to 19 year olds by qualification at Gateshead Stadium
- ♦ Weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> July. DSE National Track and Field for 12 to 19 year olds by qualification at Stanley Park, Blackpool

For further information, please contact Rod Rogers

on [rod.rogers@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:rod.rogers@northumberland.gov.uk)

or 07515 284279

## Northumberland Parent, Carer and Professional Forum - update

The second round of locality meetings for the Parent, Carer and Professional Forum took place during March.

General feedback from parents was that they find the meetings a useful way of obtaining information. They are keen to meet professionals working in their communities and to access any training relevant to the needs of their child. The parents felt that an annual parents' conference provides the opportunity to share information and network with other parents.

Representatives from the Disabled Children's Access to Childcare (DCATCH) team attended the meetings to explain more about their work. Their aim is to help the parents of disabled children (0 - 18 years) access childcare in order that they may be able to get back into work or training.

Items discussed at the main Forum meeting included an explanation of the new structure within Children's Services resulting from Northumberland's move to a single unitary authority.

A parents' perspective was provided on the experience of support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

The meeting provided the opportunity for John Kirton, Strategy Development Coordinator, to provide an update on a major review of services for children and young people with additional needs.

Feedback from consultations was provided. The main messages from parents, carers, children and young people is that services are great when they are:

- ◆ Holistic (take into account the needs of the whole family)
- ◆ Coordinated
- ◆ Local
- ◆ Consistent
- ◆ Client and Community Focused

Berwick has been chosen as the pilot community to develop a blueprint for service delivery. The pilot will also look at how to engage with, and encourage, full participation of local communities in shaping their services. This work will then be rolled out to other parts of the county taking into account the individual needs of local communities.

Full details of the above will be provided at the next round of locality meetings, which will be held in June. Dates and venues to be confirmed in the next newsletter.

For more information contact INPACT on 01670 857816.

## **'Northumberland the Way Forward' - FACT Conference**

Over 100 people attended the FACT Conference held at Longhirst Hall in March. Trevor Doughty Executive Director of Children's Services highlighted achievements to date and gave an outline of the future for services for children young people and their families in Northumberland.

Councillor Simon Reed went on to described the ambitions of the new Council to increasingly address the needs and requirements of children and young people and their families within the localities where they live. In group-work sessions participants wrote down a huge number of very valuable suggestions. These will contribute to strategic thinking about service development.

For more detail, contact Margaret Hall on 01670 534299.

## **help! Programmes in Morpeth and Newcastle**

These free programmes are for parents/carers of children who have received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder within the last 18 months.

The one day *help!* programme is on Tuesday 30th June 10—3.15pm at Morpeth Rugby Club.

The *help!* programme at Thomas Bewick School in West Denton is running for 6 sessions between 5th—21st May

For more information, please phone  
Jan Fuller on 0191 5680732



## **National Autistic Society's Parent to Parent Service (P2P)**

P2P is a confidential telephone support service run by the National Autistic Society for parents or carers of an adult or child who is on the autism spectrum. The service is provided by volunteer parents who themselves have a child or adult on the autism spectrum. They have a wealth of experience, knowledge and insight and can talk through any issues, problems or feelings parents are experiencing. They can also direct callers to other sources of information and support.



Parents can call the **Freephone number 0800 9520 520** at any time and leave a message, a volunteer will then call them back, at a convenient time to them, as soon as possible.

## Information Event for Young People

Newcastle College in partnership with RNIB will be holding a drop-in event where young people who are blind or partially sighted and their parents/ carers will get the chance to find out about post 16 opportunities available to them. It is due to take place on **Saturday 25th April 2009, between 11am - 1pm** at Ground Floor Armstrong Building, Rye Hill Campus, Newcastle College, NE4 7SA. You will have the chance to see the support facilities available at the college as well as talk to current students about their experiences. Also present will be a range of external organisations and services, letting you know of on-going exciting events and activities available to you throughout the region.



For more information please contact the Learning Support Service on 0191 200 4189 or [learning.support@ncl-coll.ac.uk](mailto:learning.support@ncl-coll.ac.uk)



## Free Cinema Ticket for Carers!

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card is a nationally recognised card entitling the holder to a free cinema ticket *for the person accompanying them*. The card is valid for 3 years from the date of issue and costs £5.00 to pay for processing. An application form can be printed from the CEA website [www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk) or collected from a participating cinema.

Details can be obtained from The Card Network Tel: 0151 348 8020.



## Disabled Children's Questionnaire - Key findings

You may recall receiving a questionnaire last July with your Network Newsletter. This questionnaire asked for your views and opinions about childcare in Northumberland. It is important to feedback the results of this questionnaire to parents, which is why there is a summary ("Disabled Children's Questionnaire - Key findings") enclosed with this newsletter.

Hopefully you will find this informative and interesting. This questionnaire is one part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment which helps towards ensuring that there is sufficient childcare in Northumberland.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more information please contact Lauren Widdrington, Northumberland Infonet on 01670 534757 or email [lauren.widdrington@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:lauren.widdrington@northumberland.gov.uk).

## Regional Parent Partnership Annual Parents' Conference

This year's Regional Parent Partnership Annual Parents' Conference is due to take place on Thursday 18th June at the Oakwood Centre, Eaglescliffe, Stockton on Tees. It will run from 9.45am—2.45pm with a number of workshops for parent to choose from. The conference is free for parents and includes lunch. For more information and a booking form, please contact Kerry Ford on 01325 254484 or email [kerry.ford@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:kerry.ford@darlington.gov.uk)

## Changing mats for 'older' children

You may know this problem: you are out of the house and your child needs changing. You find a disabled toilet and there is a changing table but it is meant for babies, far too small for your child so they have to lie on a cold hard floor while you change them. The disabled toilet at Alnwick Garden has a yoga mat for use in just this situation. Children's Services have taken a leaf out of their book and provided a yoga mat for each of the 55 RADAR key public toilets maintained by District, Town or Parish Councils in Northumberland. The mats have been paid for from the 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' grant.



Some of the articles in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and are not necessarily supported by Northumberland County Council.

Produced by Children's Services, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2EF  
Contact Jackie Stanton Tel: (01670) 533883

If you require this newsletter in an alternative format, please contact 01670 857816.



action for  
children IN-PACT

Supporting families who have children with special needs

NORTHUMBERLAND  
COUNTY COUNCIL

If you would like your child to be registered on the Network Register for Children with Disabilities, you will receive your own copy of our Network Newsletter. Please complete below to receive an application form and send to **Jackie Stanton, FACT, Children's Services, County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF**

Name of child: .....

Name of parent: .....

Address of child: .....