

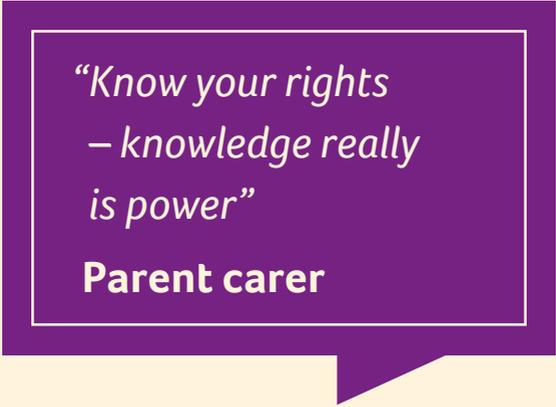
# MONEY MATTERS



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN



contact



*“Know your rights  
– knowledge really  
is power”*

**Parent carer**

This guide covers England, Scotland and Wales.

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# DISABILITY & SICKNESS BENEFITS

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## DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA)

DLA is the main benefit for disabled children under the age of 16. It is there to help meet any extra costs of being disabled. Any ill or disabled child may be able to qualify, even those who don't have a diagnosis. It is not means-tested, so your financial situation will not be taken into account. Getting DLA can sometimes lead to an increase in other benefits, or help families qualify for them if they don't already get them. A child may qualify if:

- ***they need extra care or supervision - they may qualify for the care component***
- ***they need help getting around - they may qualify for the mobility component. The higher rate of the mobility component can give access to the Motability Scheme to lease a car.***



For more information see our guide: [www.contact.org.uk/dlaguide](http://www.contact.org.uk/dlaguide)

Disability Living Allowance Helpline:

**0800 121 4600** Textphone: **0800 121 4523**

## PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT (PIP)

DLA for adults aged 16–64 is being replaced by a new benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Like DLA it is not means-tested and it also has two types of payment – known as a mobility component and a daily living component.

PIP has already replaced new claims for DLA by disabled adults. However, some existing DLA claimants are also automatically asked to claim PIP. For example, if your child gets DLA and is turning 16 they will be asked to claim PIP shortly after their birthday.

*“DLA means my son gets to do the same things other kids do. The extra money makes a huge difference - I cried when I got the letter.”*

**Parent carer**

The Government is also in the process of re-assessing all other existing adult DLA claimants under the PIP rules.



For more on PIP see our guide: [www.contact.org.uk/pipguide](http://www.contact.org.uk/pipguide)

Personal Independence Payment Claim Line:

**0800 917 2222** Textphone: **0800 917 7777**

## **EMPLOYMENT & SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (ESA)**

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a benefit for people over 16 whose capacity for work is limited by their health problems.

There are two types of ESA: **contributory** ESA, and **income-related** ESA.

Some people will receive both types of payment, others may only get one or the other. Since most young disabled people have not worked and paid national insurance contributions they usually can only get income-related ESA. If your son or daughter claims ESA, any tax credits or benefits you get for them (other than DLA or PIP) will stop. Contact our freephone helpline for more information.



For more on ESA see our guide: [www.contact.org.uk/pipguide](http://www.contact.org.uk/pipguide)

Jobcentre Plus Claim Line Freephone:

**0800 055 6688** Textphone: **0800 023 4888**

# BENEFITS IF YOU'RE OUT OF FULL TIME WORK

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## CONTRIBUTION-BASED JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE

Payable for six months for individuals who are unemployed and have recently paid sufficient national insurance contributions. You must be looking for work in order to claim.

## INCOME SUPPORT AND INCOME-BASED JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE

These are means-tested benefits for people who are not working, or working fewer than 16 hours a week. Some carers qualify if they work more hours than this. Income support is a benefit for people who are not expected to look for work because of their caring responsibilities and who are on a low income.

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Jobcentre Plus Claim Line Freephone:  
**0800 055 6688** Textphone: **0800 023 4888**

*"Most new parents still don't realise they can claim Disability Living Allowance for their child or Carer's Allowance for themselves. Some feel they shouldn't, others think their child won't qualify. But it can make such a huge difference to families."*

**Parent carer**

# WORKING TAX CREDIT

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This is extra money for families with children where someone is working a required number of hours. This is 16 hours a week if you are a lone parent, or you are a couple and one partner works at least 16 hours and the other partner is entitled to Carer's Allowance or is incapacitated. Most other couples with children need to work at least 24 hours to be eligible. The amount you get will depend on your circumstances and annual income, but there is no limit on the amount of savings you can have.

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See our website for more information about Working Tax Credit:  
[www.contact.org.uk/tax-credits](http://www.contact.org.uk/tax-credits)

Tax Credits Helpline: **0345 300 3900** Textphone: **0345 300 3909**



# MONEY AND VOUCHERS FOR HAVING CHILDREN

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## CHILD TAX CREDIT

This can be claimed by anyone who is responsible for a 'dependent child'. This means a child aged under the age of 16, or aged 16-19 if they are in non-advanced education or certain types of unwaged training. The amount you get is based on your family circumstances and your annual income (unlike other means-tested benefits there is no limit on the amount of savings you can have). Your award may be higher if you have a child on DLA or PIP, or who is registered blind.

Usually the amount of tax credits you are paid increases with your family size. This is because you can get an extra tax credit payment, known as the child element, for each child in your family. However, special rules known as the 'two child limit' mean that you don't normally receive an extra child element for a third or subsequent child if they were born after 5 April 2017.



Find out more on our website: [www.contact.org.uk/tax-credits](http://www.contact.org.uk/tax-credits)  
Tax Credits Helpline: **0345 300 3900** Textphone: **0345 300 3909**

*"Asking for help isn't a sign of failure, it's a way forward to support your child, increase your knowledge and feel in control."*

**Parent carer**

## CHILD BENEFIT

A payment if you are responsible for a dependent child (see definition on page 8). If someone in your household earns £50,000 or more, part or all of the benefit will be recovered via the tax system.

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Child Benefit Office: **0300 200 3100**

Textphone: **0300 200 3103**

## SURE START MATERNITY GRANT

A £500 grant for those who have recently given birth or adopted a child, and are on certain benefits.

Normally you can only get a grant if your baby is your first child, or if all your other children are aged 16 or above. However, an exception can sometimes be made if you have a multiple birth (for example, twins). Seek further advice in these circumstances.

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Apply online or call Sure Start Maternity Grant Helpline:

[www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant](http://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant) **0345 603 6967**

## HEALTHY START SCHEME

If you are pregnant or have a child under four – you may be able to get vouchers for milk, fruit, vegetables and vitamins. You also need to be receiving certain benefits to qualify (unless you are under 18 and pregnant).

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Healthy Start Helpline:

**0345 607 6823** [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

## TAX FREE CHILDCARE

This is a Government scheme to help working families with childcare costs. For every £8 you pay into a childcare account, the Government will contribute an extra £2. The most they will contribute for a disabled child is £4,000 a year. However, if you open a tax free childcare account you no longer get any tax credits or Universal Credit. This may leave you much worse off. If you have a child aged 2–4 you may also be eligible for free early education and childcare.



Find out more at [www.contact.org.uk/finding-childcare](http://www.contact.org.uk/finding-childcare)

Contact your local council or see [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

Tax Free Childcare Helpline **0300 123 4097**

*“My son has complex needs which affect his development, motor skills and behaviour. However, it never entered my head that he may be able to claim a benefit. I made a claim which has now been granted. This will make a big difference to us as a family. I only wonder that all the myriad social workers, doctors and other professionals we have seen over four years never mentioned it.”*

**Parent carer**

# CARER'S ALLOWANCE

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This is extra money for carers who care for someone who gets either DLA care component at the middle or highest rate or PIP daily living component at any rate. Eligibility depends on the circumstances and weekly earnings of the carer. You can't get Carer's Allowance if you are a full time student, or if you work and earn more than £116 per week after deductions (£120 per week from April 2018).

If you are on Universal Credit and the only thing that stops you getting Carer's Allowance is your earnings, you should still get an extra payment known as a carer addition as part of your Universal Credit award.

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Find out more in our factsheet: [www.contact.org.uk/carers-allowance](http://www.contact.org.uk/carers-allowance)  
Carer's Allowance Unit: **0800 731 0297** Textphone: **0800 731 0317**  
[www.gov.uk/carers-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance)



# UNIVERSAL CREDIT

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A new benefit called Universal Credit is replacing new claims for:

- **Income Support**
- **Housing Benefit**
- **Child Tax Credit**
- **Working Tax Credit**
- **income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **income-related Employment and Support Allowance.**

These are known as the 'legacy benefits'.

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit, so the amount you can get will depend on your income and capital as well as your other family circumstances. It can be paid whether you are in or out of work. Universal Credit includes amounts for you, your children and certain housing costs. If you work you can also get help with registered childcare costs. Some families will be worse off on Universal Credit than on legacy benefits.

If you have a disabled child you will only be asked to claim Universal Credit if:

- ***you live in an area where the Universal Credit 'full service' has been introduced. To find out whether this applies in your area enter your postcode at <http://universalcreditinfo.net>; and***
- ***you try to make a new claim for a legacy benefit; and***
- ***you have no more than two dependent children. You cannot currently claim Universal Credit if you have three or more dependent children, but this is likely to change from October 2018.***

For now, existing claimants who don't try to make a new claim for a legacy benefit won't be affected by Universal Credit. These existing claimants aren't expected to be moved onto Universal Credit until July 2019 – March 2022.



See our factsheet: [www.contact.org.uk/universal-credit-essentials](http://www.contact.org.uk/universal-credit-essentials)  
Universal Credit Helpline: **0800 328 9344** Textphone **0800 328 1344**



## AT SCHOOL

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### **FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

If your child is registered at a maintained school, the education authority must provide a free midday meal if you claim certain benefits. In some parts of the UK certain other young school children also qualify.

### **SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

Education authorities (or children's departments) have discretion to help with the cost of school clothing for pupils in maintained schools.

In Wales, a grant for uniforms is available to pupils entering Year 7 who are eligible for free school meals. It is also available for pupils aged 11 at the start of the school year who go to a special school, special needs resource base or pupil referral unit, and who are also eligible for free school meals.

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Contact your local education authority for more details.

## **SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

Education authorities must provide transport or help with the costs if it is necessary to help a child get to the nearest suitable school.

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For more information see our website:

[www.contact.org.uk/school-college-transport](http://www.contact.org.uk/school-college-transport)

## **VISITING A CHILD AT A SPECIAL SCHOOL**

Education authorities have discretion to pay some or all of the fares of parents visiting children at a special school a long way from home.

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Contact your local education authority for more information.

## **EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA) – WALES AND SCOTLAND**

A weekly payment for 16–18 year olds (and some 19 year olds) who stay on at school/college or who undertake certain types of unwaged training. The amount awarded depends on parental income.

## 16–19 BURSARY – ENGLAND ONLY

There are two types of 16-19 bursary – a discretionary bursary for which any young person can apply. However, whether you receive a payment is at the discretion of your school or college. There is also a vulnerable student bursary of £1,200 per year for certain groups, including disabled students who receive DLA/PIP and who also get Employment and Support Allowance (or Universal Credit). This bursary may be paid in kind rather than in cash.

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 Go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for Education Maintenance Allowance or 16–19 Bursary to find out how to apply.

*“Getting a nursery place for my daughter when she was three, made her transition to school much easier as she had friends that understood her disabilities. It also helped me get back to work sooner, before I lost my confidence about being out of the job market.”*

**Parent carer**

# HELP WITH RENT, MORTGAGE & COUNCIL TAX

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## HOUSING BENEFIT

People on a low income and savings under £16,000 (or over if in receipt of the guarantee element of Pension Credit) can apply for Housing Benefit to help with their rent. This includes those with low earnings.

## DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS

A local authority can make a discretionary payment if you are entitled to some Housing Benefit and need further financial assistance to meet your housing costs, for example if there is a shortfall due to the bedroom tax rules. Apply to your local authority for housing benefit and to make an application for discretionary housing payments.

## HELP WITH MORTGAGE INTEREST PAYMENTS

This is only available as part of a claim for Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit or Universal Credit. From April 2018, the Government intends that help with mortgage interest will stop being treated as a benefit and will instead become a loan that you must repay when you sell or transfer your home.

## DISABILITY REDUCTION SCHEME

A non means-tested reduction on the council tax bill for people who:

- ***use a wheelchair indoors, or***
- ***have an extra bathroom or kitchen in the house for a disabled occupier, or***
- ***have set aside a room for a disabled person, for example, using a dining room to store equipment.***

## COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT

Your council tax bill is reduced by 25 per cent (50 per cent in some cases) if there are fewer than two adults in your household. The presence of children and certain adults (including some carers) can be ignored. Apply to your local council for this reduction.

## LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEMES

Help for council tax payers on a low income. The help available varies depending on where in the country you live. Each council in England has its own scheme, with national schemes in Scotland and Wales.



For more information on all these topics see our website or download our guide: [www.contact.org.uk/council-tax](http://www.contact.org.uk/council-tax)



# AT HOME

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## **ADAPTING YOUR HOME IN ENGLAND AND WALES – DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT**

These grants are awarded where works are considered essential to enable better access and movement at home or to make a property safe for a disabled occupant. The maximum grant payable is £30,000 in England and £36,000 in Wales.

## **SCOTLAND – SCHEME OF ASSISTANCE**

In Scotland, mandatory grants are available for work to a property that's deemed essential to meet the needs of a disabled person. A grant must cover at least 80 per cent of approved costs, with the other 20 per cent being means-tested.

A mandatory grant cannot be made to cover the costs of an extension to create additional living space.



For more information see our guide to equipment and adaptations:  
[www.contact.org.uk/aids-equipment-adaptations](http://www.contact.org.uk/aids-equipment-adaptations)

## **INSULATING YOUR HOME AND CUTTING ENERGY BILLS**



For details of Government backed schemes call:  
England, NI and Wales: Energy Saving Advice Service: **0800 512 012**  
Scotland: Home Energy Scotland: **0808 808 2282**

## **HELP WITH HEATING BILLS**

Under the Warm Homes Discount Scheme 'broader group', some families with a disabled child can get £140 off their winter fuel bill. As well as

having a disabled child, you must be in receipt of certain means-tested benefits, or have a tax credit award based on an income of £16,190 or less. Discounts are limited and given on a first come, first served basis. Not all suppliers take part. Call your energy supplier for more details.

## **COLD WEATHER PAYMENTS**

If the average temperature in your area over seven consecutive days drops below zero degrees then you may receive a payment of £25. This only applies if you get a means-tested benefit AND you meet certain other tests, for example you have a child on DLA or PIP.



For more information on help with fuel bills visit our website:  
[www.contact.org.uk/fuel-bill-financial-help](http://www.contact.org.uk/fuel-bill-financial-help)

## **FURNITURE RE-USE SCHEMES**

These schemes provide low-cost second hand and reconditioned furniture and white goods for families on a low income.



To find your local scheme, visit the Furniture Re-use Network website:  
[www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)

## **TV LICENCE**

If you, or someone you live with is registered blind or severely sight impaired, you qualify for a 50 per cent reduction on the cost of your TV licence. If the person who is registered blind is not the current licence holder, you will need to transfer the licence into their name first.



TV Licensing:  
**0300 790 6130** [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)



## TRANSPORT

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### **HELP WITH GETTING A CAR**

If your child is awarded the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, or the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment at the enhanced rate, you have the option of using that money to lease a new car through the Motability Scheme.

To access this scheme your child's award must normally have at least 12 months left to run.

If you're unable to drive and need help with paying for lessons, or require help with the costs of a deposit or adaptations to a vehicle you can also apply to Motability for a discretionary grant.



To find out more contact Motability:  
**01279 635 999** [www.motability.org.uk](http://www.motability.org.uk)

## FREE ROAD TAX FOR YOUR CAR

You can get a 100 per cent rebate if you qualify for, or have a child aged three or over, who qualifies for either DLA mobility component at the higher rate or PIP mobility component at the enhanced rate. A 50 per cent rebate is made where someone qualifies for PIP mobility component at the standard rate. The car must be used to meet the disabled person's needs. You should be sent information about this scheme when you receive the decision awarding you either DLA or PIP.

*"The money has eased the pressure on my husband. We were relying on his overtime to see us through but now he can spend more time with my daughter and little boy."*

**Parent carer**

## **A BLUE BADGE FOR YOUR CAR**

This allows access to disabled parking. You will qualify automatically if you get DLA mobility component at the higher rate. Disabled adults on PIP also automatically qualify for a Blue Badge if they score 8 points or more under the PIP activity of ‘moving around’. In Scotland and Wales entitlement has also been extended to those adults who score 12 points or more in the PIP activity of ‘planning and following a journey’. You may also qualify if your child is under three and has a condition which means they either need to be accompanied by bulky equipment or kept near a vehicle at all times. Certain other groups can also apply but whether they are awarded a badge will depend on an individual assessment. Contact your local authority to apply.

## **HELP WITH BUS TRAVEL**

Disabled people are usually entitled to free local off-peak bus travel. In some areas, an essential companion can get free travel alongside the disabled person. Contact your local authority for more details.

## **DISABLED PERSON’S RAILCARD**

Buying this railcard entitles disabled people up to a third off most train fares.



**0345 605 0525**

Textphone **0345 601 0132**

# GRANTS AND LOANS

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There are several sources of help from grant making organisations.

- **LOCAL AUTHORITIES:** each area has its own scheme offering financial assistance to families. This may take the form of a grant, loan or assistance in kind. In England each council has its own scheme, in Scotland there is a nationwide system of grants under the Scottish Welfare Fund and in Wales there is a discretionary assistance fund.
- **BUDGETING LOANS:** from Jobcentre Plus for those on certain means-tested benefits. These have been replaced by budgeting advances for those on Universal Credit.
- **CHARITIES:** there are hundreds of funds for certain occupations, disabilities or those in certain geographical areas.

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 For a list of charities, call our helpline or download it from our website:  
[www.contact.org.uk/financial-support](http://www.contact.org.uk/financial-support)  
**0808 808 3555** [helpline@contact.org.uk](mailto:helpline@contact.org.uk)

## FAMILY FUND

Grants for families on certain benefits, whose child is severely disabled and aged 17 or under.

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 **01904 550 055**  
[www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

# OTHER HELP

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## **NHS COSTS, GLASSES, HOSPITAL FARES, FREE PRESCRIPTIONS**

There are a range of benefits for prescription costs, glasses, going to hospital for treatment (including accompanying a child) and certain dental costs. The criteria are different for each.

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 See our website for more information [www.contact.org.uk/health](http://www.contact.org.uk/health)  
If you live in Scotland see [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland)

## **PERSONAL BUDGETS AND DIRECT PAYMENTS**

A personal budget is an amount of money that is available to spend on support for your child. The money might come from your local social work team or from the NHS. In England it can also come from your local education department. Having a personal budget should mean that it is much clearer what money is available to fund the help your child needs. You can choose to manage this budget yourself, ask someone to manage the budget for you or get your council to provide you with the services instead. If you choose to manage the budget yourself you may have the option of receiving direct payments. These are regular payments that you must use to buy services for your child. You can use direct payments to employ a care assistant or buy in services from an organisation that provides care.

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 For more information visit our website or read our factsheet:  
[www.contact.org.uk/personal-budgets-direct-payments](http://www.contact.org.uk/personal-budgets-direct-payments)

## UK CINEMA ASSOCIATION CARD

Free tickets for a person to accompany a child aged eight or over to the cinema if they receive DLA or PIP or are registered blind. Also, many local attractions offer discount schemes and queue jump passes for disabled people and their carers. Ask when you book.



**01244 526 016** Textphone **18001 01244 526 016**  
[www.ceacard.co.uk](http://www.ceacard.co.uk)

*“It’s been a tremendous help. I’m paying for my seven year old (who has Asperger’s) to attend a youth club, and for football three nights a week. It’s helping him socialise and use up some energy, and the youth workers report a great improvement in his behaviour and well being.”*

**Parent carer**

## **OTHER BENEFITS**

Call our freephone helpline if you have a child with a disability and:

- you are sick or disabled as a result of an accident or illness at work, or after service in the armed forces
- your spouse (including common law spouse in Scotland) or civil partner has died – there are special benefits for bereavement
- you care for an orphaned child or one whose parents are in prison
- you are of Pension Credit qualifying age. There are pensions and pension credits you may be entitled to
- you are disabled and 65 or over – you might get Attendance Allowance
- some larger families, or those with particular disabilities, may be able to get help with metered water charges.

Written by Derek Sinclair



# GET IN CONTACT

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Our helpline advisers can support you with any issue about raising your disabled child: help in the early years, diagnosis, benefits, education and local support.

 0808 808 3555

 [info@contact.org.uk](mailto:info@contact.org.uk)

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

 [twitter.com/contactfamilies](https://twitter.com/contactfamilies)

 [facebook.com/contactfamilies](https://facebook.com/contactfamilies)

 [youtube.com/contactfamilies](https://youtube.com/contactfamilies)

Contact Head Office  
209–211 City Road  
London EC1V 1JN



We are Contact, the charity for families with disabled children.

We support families with the best possible guidance and information.

We bring families together to support each other.

We help families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve life for themselves and others.

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