

“When I found out that Josie was disabled I didn't know how I was going to cope. I just didn't think I'd be able to do it alone. Pretty soon I realised I didn't have to.”

You're not alone

If your child has a disability the future may seem like a real struggle, not just for them, but for you too. The word 'disabled' covers a very wide range of different conditions and it is thought that 15% of people in the UK have some form of disability at some time in their lives.

Remember you and your child are not alone.



The Government, Local Council, Health and Education Authorities give a offer range of benefits, facilities, support and advice for children with disabilities and their carers.

Legal Protection: Your child is protected by law. The Disabilities Discrimination Act says it is against the law for any service provider (including schools, businesses and organisations) to treat disabled people less fairly than other people because of their disability. It also asks them to make reasonable adjustments to their services, like ramps or disabled toilets, so that disabled people can use them too.

Health: From the start, your Doctor and local Health Service are there for you. They'll give the help and advice you need to discover and assess your child's disability. They'll help you plan the treatment, therapy, equipment and ongoing medical care that your child may need.

Benefits: There are several benefits that you could receive to help you with the costs of caring for a disabled child. These include:

- Disability Living Allowance,
- Carers Allowance,
- Help with extra housing costs and
- Carers Blue Badge scheme.

Don't forget free dental treatment and prescriptions, help with the cost of glasses and sometimes help with travel to hospital, school meals and even not having to pay road tax.

Education: Depending on their kind of disability, your child may get better results by going to a special school - which is a place specifically designed to match their educational needs - or your child may get the extra support they need through the special needs provisions in a mainstream school. Your Education Authority and Health Service Providers will help you assess your child's special educational needs and help you find the best way forward for their education.

Extra Support: Your Council can give extra support for you and your child. This can include special leisure facilities, holidays, short breaks and many additional services for particular needs. There are many local, national and international organisations and charities specially set up to give further help, advice and support to people just like you.



Make contact: On the second page of this Factsheet you will find a list of contacts that you may find useful. You're not alone, so make contact today and get the support you need.

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Warning Signs:

Some children's disabilities are spotted early. Others take time to appear, or happen suddenly. If you think your child may have some form of disability, contact your Health Visitor or GP for advice.



Action:

Don't think you have to go it alone. Get as much information as you can about your child's condition. Find out what services, support, benefits and advice are available and make contact.



What to say:

There are many organisations specially set up to give support and advice to parents of children with a disability. Contact them and tell your story. There will be others out there just like you.



Prevention:

You can't stop your child's condition, but you can help with the disability they experience by making sure they get the best support available, and by remembering that they have rights.

Contacts:

Buckinghamshire Family Information Service: 0845 688 4944 www.bucksfamilyinfo.org

Buckinghamshire Learning Trust: 01296 383342 www.learningtrust.net/specialist-teaching-service/about-our-teams/

Carers UK: 0808 808 7777 www.carersuk.org/

Equality and Human Rights Commission: 0808 800 0082 www.equalityhumanrights.com/

Contact a Family: 0808 808 3555 www.cafamily.org.uk/