



Summer 2008

*the newsletter for families who have children with additional needs
and the professionals who work with them*

Aviemore Outreach Event

Our Additional Support Needs Information Day held in Aviemore on 8th May was a successful and informative day with speakers talking about The Education (Additional Support for (Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004; Sleep; Food, Mood and Behaviour; Adults With Incapacity/ Guardianship and last but definitely not least - Benefits.

Stalls were provided by CHIP+, Highland ADHD, HDCD, Contact a Family and Highland Carers Project. We would like to thank everyone that attended and gave their support so generously. Your feed back on the event was all extremely positive with many parents attending every single session!!

We will be planning more events in locations throughout the Highland area. Next time we will ensure that you have more time between sessions to chill out and talk to other parents and ask questions. We encourage you to let us know what topics you would like us to talk about in your area. The more feedback we get from you the better.

Thank you again to everyone involved in the Aviemore event. We could not have done it without you.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The CHIP+ Annual General Meeting will take place on **25 September 2008**. Venue and further details to follow.

The Action on Additives Campaign

This is co-ordinated by the Food Commission and lists over 100 foods, drinks and medicines which contain the suspect food additives that could be linked to a negative effect on children's behaviour and much more.

They also provide an action card which gives details of the main suspect food additives. This handy reminder of the 'E' numbers to watch out for is only the size of a credit card so should easily fit into your purse or wallet. CHIP+ also has a supply.

For more information visit their website:
www.actiononadditives.com

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

This allowance of up to £30 per week is payable to eligible young adults who stay on in full-time education at school or college after their 16th birthday.

Before payments can be issued the young person has to satisfy attendance requirements and complete a Learning Agreement (LA). A Learning Agreement is a contract between the young person and their school or college and the school will notify the EMA Unit that the LA has been completed.

EMA Application form 2008/09 for those attending Highland Council schools can be downloaded from their website.

STEPS

This charity covers the whole of the UK and provides a **FREE Developmental Toy and Switch Lending Library service to individual children between 0 and 16 who are unable to play without assistive technology**. They also run a subscription service for organisations. They have amassed a huge stock of unique battery-operated toys, external switches, expertise in adaptation techniques and in the matching of toys and switches to the needs of the disabled child.

Mainstream toys are adapted so that, with a special external switch, children can play independently by switching on the toys by squeezing, pressing, bashing, blowing, sucking... whatever movement the child has. To obtain further information:

Email: info@stepscharity.org

Tel: **1803 294801**

www.stepscharity.org

NHS 24 and Emergency Care Summary (ECS)

When someone phones the NHS helpline the person taking the call asks for basic information such as name, address, DOB and GP details. This allows them to find the patient's Emergency Care Summary (ECS).

This summary provides details of the medication a person may be on and their relevant medical history. The information is provided by the patient's GP. It is important to ensure that your GP has filled in an ECS for the person you care for, so it can be flagged up that the person has complex needs.

Information in the ECS should contain details of any medical conditions, medication and also particulars of any guardian or attorney appointed.

It is important that this information is kept up to date. It can only be updated by the patient's GP.

VAT Tax Benefits for Disabled People

People buying goods or some services in the EU including the UK would normally pay VAT. Disabled people have the right not to pay VAT on products designed for disabled people or if they have equipment adapted for their use.

Certain services are also VAT free for the disabled such as building services provided to adapt the disabled person's home for a better standard of living and the hiring of wheelchairs. The rules regarding products and services for which VAT is not applicable are complex, for not everything that is supplied to disabled people falls into the category of zero rate VAT.

Buying a new car free of VAT can save a significant amount of money e.g. £1,500 on a £10,000 car. There are specific rules governing the extent of the driver's disability and the use to which the car is put. The vehicle must be designed or adapted before purchase, so that at least one disabled person can drive or travel in it, who would normally use a wheelchair. The car must be for domestic or personal use. All modifications must be included on the main invoice and VAT exemption cannot be claimed after the purchase has been made.

Adaptations include: swivel seat, hoist, box for the wheelchair fitted to the top or the back of the vehicle, hand controls, push/pull brake and accelerator or infra-red units that operate the secondary controls. Adaptations such as the fitting of a roof rack, attachment of a trailer or automatic transmission do not make the vehicle eligible for VAT relief.

The declaration form can be provided by the supplier. The form is completed by or on behalf of the disabled person and given to the supplier who keeps it for his/her VAT returns. You do not have to be registered as disabled to claim this exemption. For further information contact the National VAT Advice Service
Tel: **0845 010 9000** or
Textphone: **0845 0000 200**

Changing Faces Scotland

This is the Scottish branch of a National charity supporting and representing children, young people and adults with disfigurements (whether congenital or acquired). They can help address the social and psychological issues posed by disfigurement as well as the physical and functional needs.

Whatever the cause of a child having a changed or different appearance, the evidence demonstrates that good quality support should be available to help the child and their family to deal with the social and psychological impact of the disfigurement, and to deal with other people's reactions to their visible difference.

The organisation can provide a practical disfigurement life-skills programme through one-to-one counselling, advice, group workshops, self-help guides and videos. This programme, plus self-help booklets, children's fiction, leaflets and videos can help children, their parents and siblings to find ways of:-

- Coming to terms with a changed appearance
- Cultivating self-confidence/self-esteem
- Dealing with staring, teasing, bullying etc
- Managing comments/questions about their appearance
- Developing social skills
- Preparing for starting/changing schools

For further information:

Tel: **0845 4500 640** or

Email: scotland@changingfaces.org.uk
www.changingfaces.org.uk

Self-directed Support - Direct Payments

The revised guidance issued to local authorities about direct payments now refers to direct payments as "**self-directed support**".

The document is called "National guidance on Self-directed Support" and can be downloaded from the publications section of the Scottish Government website - www.scotland.gov.uk

RADAR - The National Key Scheme (NKS)

This offers independent access to disabled people to around 7,000 locked public toilets around the country. The NKS is suggested for use only if the provider concerned has to keep the toilets locked to stop vandalism and misuse.

RADAR (a national organisation run by disabled people) makes no profit supplying keys but needs to make a small charge to cover the costs of supply.

For further information on how to obtain a key check the website: www.radar.org.uk or

Phone: **020 7250 3222**

Minicom: **020 7250 4119**

Email: radar@radar.org.uk

Enquire - website for children/young people

Enquire have launched its new-look website for children and young people. The easily accessible site is a great source of information where children and young people can download useful guides, find out about local youth clubs or join in with the young person's "blog". To view the site go to www.enquire.org.uk/yp

Renewing the Mobility Allowance

People receiving the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for a fixed amount of time, can complete a DLA Renewal Claim Pack before their allowance expires. This ensures the allowance continues while their needs are being reassessed. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can issue DLA Renewal Claim Packs up to six months before an allowance is due to expire.

This allows plenty of time for the DWP to get any further medical evidence needed before the allowance runs out. It also gives people time to have their award reconsidered if they are unhappy with the new DWP decision.

For further information, call the DWP DLA Helpline on **08457 123456**.

Carers and Council Tax

It is not widely publicised but some carers could qualify for up to 50% off their council tax bills.

The Carers Scotland helpline has helped in cases where the carer has been paying too much since as early as 1993 when Council Tax was first introduced. The good news is that this money can be backdated all the way to 1993, leading in some cases to substantial backdating awards of thousands of pounds.

Patrick Begley is Director of Carers Scotland, says that "It is well worth carers getting independent advice about their council tax payments, even if they have been paying for years. Local councils may insist they have the calculation right, but often they fail to understand the various types of help with council tax they are obliged by law to offer. Their written or online information can be confusing. You may need to be persistent with your appeal."

Carers Scotland has issued updated advice for carers on their website, including a template letter that carers can use to ask their council to recalculate their council tax.

If you are a carer and want to find out if you should be getting a discount on council tax, visit the Carers Scotland website

www.carerscotland.org/Information/Financialhelp/Helpwithcounciltax

Kidsleep - Sleep Aid Alarm Clock

There is an alarm clock which can be set showing a picture of a rabbit either asleep or awake. Your child learns that if the bunny is in bed then he/she should stay in bed and if the bunny is awake he/she can get up.

Variously known as the "Night and Day Clock", "Toddler Alarm" etc, it is available for around £35, including from Amazon.

Just Google Kidsleep and you should find several entries.

USEFUL WEBSITES AND HELPLINES

"My Life" is a website launched by Diabetes UK especially for young diabetics.

www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/My-life

For a range of information re education issues within the Highland Council area:

www.highland.gov.uk/learninghere/supportforlearners/policiesprotocolsguidelines.htm

If you are visually impaired and would like to go to the cinema why not check out a website where you can get regular emails telling you about audio-described performances at your local cinema.

www.yourlocalcinema.com/ad.html

The Motability website enables visitors to change the way they view or use it according to individual needs; e.g. the Browsealoud facility is useful for those people who want to listen to, rather than read the content of the website. Font size, style and colour combination can also be changed. www.motability.co.uk

If you require products for someone with special physical needs/specialist healthcare requirements it is advised that you deal with firms that are members of the British Healthcare Traders Association (BHTA). For a list of BHTA members and a copy of their Code of Practice go to www.bhta.com

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