



# THE BOOK OF INFORMATION THAT NOBODY TELLS YOU ABOUT

Little treasures autism charity for autistic adults, children, and their families.

Webpage [www.littletreasures.website.co.uk](http://www.littletreasures.website.co.uk)

To donate please email [littletreasuresfunding@gmail.com](mailto:littletreasuresfunding@gmail.com)

To join our mailing list email [ltmailing@gmail.com](mailto:ltmailing@gmail.com)

For general enquiries please email [littletreasures18@gmail.com](mailto:littletreasures18@gmail.com)

Follow us on Facebook.

For little treasures its [@2018community](https://www.facebook.com/@2018community)

For Autie mates its [@AUTIEMATES](https://www.facebook.com/AUTIEMATES)

Scan the QR codes to access our TikTok and Instagram pages.



## DURHAM & DARLINGTON CARERS

### HAVE YOU GOT A CARERS CARD?

The **County Durham and Darlington Carers card**, developed in partnership with Durham County Council, Darlington Borough Council and NHS County Durham and Darlington recognises and rewards the support Carers provide to their neighbours, friends, and family.

To receive discounts and concessions from businesses and organisations in the scheme, the Carer will need to produce their Carers card.

To apply for the card please contact Durham County Carers Support on **0300 005 1213**

You will receive a carers card and it can be used for lots of discount in various places. Durham County Carers Support offers a variety of different services to local carers.

### WHAT ELSE THEY CAN HELP WITH

We can work with you to help you find the information you need to care for someone and can inform you about other services to help you look after yourself. We can provide:

- One to one tailored support
- A listening ear
- Help with completing forms.
- Access to grants and funding
- Help to take a break from your caring role, spa days, bikes etc.
- Signposting to relevant organisations who can also support.
- Groups and Events
- Training on various topics
- Counselling sessions
- Carers Discount Card
- Carers Emergency Card

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BE IN RECEIPT OF CARERS ALLOWENCE TO REGISTER WITH DURHAM AND DARLINGTON CARERS THIS IS COMPLETELY SEPERATE**

<https://www.dccarers.org/>

## DURHAM AREA DISABILITY LEISURE GROUP

This is one of our favourite support services, you do need to be living in Durham and your child must have a disability. They arrange some amazing social activities such as go karting, Blackpool Zoo, bowling and loads more!!! It's a MUST to get signed up for their newsletters.

07592 366454

[dadlg08@googlemail.com](mailto:dadlg08@googlemail.com)

## Splashability

Splashability offers disabled children and young people increased access to swimming pools at weekends.

### Timetable

- [Spennymoor Leisure Centre](#) - Sunday 4.00 - 5.00pm
- [The Louisa centre](#) – Sunday 3.00-4.00pm

Sessions cost £2.50 per child or young person, up to two carers can attend free upon presentation of Durham and Darlington carers card. All other family members or participants can swim for £2.50.

### Who can attend?

Sessions are open to anyone with special education or disability needs, including their carers and family.

### Benefits of Splashability

For disabled children, young people and adults that never take part in swimming activities, Splashability provides an opportunity to improve their water confidence and take part in fun exercise.

## SPRINGBOARD

### ABOUT SPRINGBOARD

Springboard aims to support the development of sustainable communities, where people have the skills needed for work and life.

The charity operates across the northeast, with bases in Hartlepool, Peterlee, Sunderland, Hetton, Jarrow and Allen heads.

Springboard provides a wide range of opportunities through Apprenticeships, flexible Study programmes and Springboard Works (our project to support unemployed people back to the world of work).

At the heart of Springboard are our values –

#### **We will –**

*Enable people, whatever their needs, to achieve their aims.*

*Develop skilled and employable learners, ready for work and life.*

*Ensure an accessible service is available to meet the identified needs of all our customers.*

*Apply the highest standards of quality in all we do.*

*Embrace the diverse nature of the communities where we work and provide a positive environment for achievement.*

*Support economic development in our region.*

*Innovate to meet the needs of those we work with*

*Recognise that business success is essential for our future work.*

**THEY OFFER COURSES AND EMPLOYMENT FOR CHILDREN AGED 16-17 WITH DISABILITIES AND COURSES, SUPPORT AND EMPLOYMENT FOR ADULTS AGED 18 PLUS.**

## SPECTRUM ENTERPRISE

### WHO ARE THEY?

We are a supported employment agency and are specialists in

- Self-employment for people who are autistic.
- Training for neurotypicals by autistics.
- PIP and ESA claims, specifically tailored to autistics (local tribunal personal service and nationwide email service)
- Quality assurance – checking by autistics for NHS local authorities etc.

We work across the North East.

We provide training and support to help autistic people to become self-employed. Working together we get to understand the talents, skills and ambitions of each person and match them with a potential business idea. Sometimes people contact us because they already have a business idea in mind and are not sure how to get started. Sometimes people contact us because they would like to set up some kind of enterprise with other people. Whatever the situation our job is to bring in a business support worker to work alongside the autistic person for up to 12 months usually.

All the businesses we help to launch are manageable and small scale, nothing too ambitious at the beginning and since spectrum enterprises is a support employment agency, we can help people to generate a little income every week under the permitted support rules.

Sometimes the people who contact us already have a job however they are finding it hard to cope. On these occasions we can provide someone to come into the office to help them to improve their performance.

<https://spectrumenterprisesccic.uk/>

## MAIN TAKING AUTISM PERSONALLY

Durham County Council (DCC) and the National Health Service (NHS) jointly fund MAIN's Autism Post Diagnostic Support Service to support people aged 16+ who are resident in County Durham and have a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum condition but who do not meet social care criteria.

### We aim to support adults in five key areas:

- Understanding your diagnosis
- Health and wellbeing
- Independent living
- Accessing the community and socialising
- Employment and volunteering

Our Autism Resource Co-ordinators (ARC) are the first point of contact and make initial assessments and draw up care plans. Following this process our Autism resource workers (ARWs) work with service users in a 1:1 basis delivering practical support in these areas up to eight weeks per identified area of need.

In addition, under the terms of this service MAIN also provides a range of funded training courses which are available to professionals, parents and carers living/working with the above group. In the following courses:

- Awareness Training
- Employing People with Autism
- Identifying Autistic Traits
- Understanding Care Plans
- Supporting People with Autism
- Challenging Behaviours and the Autism Spectrum (Promoting Positive behaviours)
- How to write Social Stories for people on the Autism Spectrum
- Autism and Ageing: Who Cares?

## EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP)

### How do we get an EHCP?

#### Step 1. Making the request

If your child's school is willing to cooperate, it can be a good idea to go through them; they've probably done it before and will be familiar with the system.

However, if you need to make the application yourself, the first thing to do is write a letter to your local authority. [IPSEA.org.uk](http://IPSEA.org.uk) have some model letters you may find useful. **We would always advise to do it yourself.**

#### Things you may want to include with your letter:

- \*Copies of reports you've had from health professionals.
- \*Details of your child's results in any national tests they've taken.
- \*School reports.

It's not compulsory to include any of these, but they can help support your case.

#### Step 2. The local authority's initial decision

Once they've received a request for an EHCP, the local authority must decide whether to carry out an assessment. They have a maximum of **six weeks** to consult and get back to you with their decision.

The purpose of an assessment is to consider whether there's evidence that a child or young person has special needs. If you already have a diagnosis, then that speeds the process along, but if you're still at the stage where you suspect autism but haven't got it confirmed, you don't have to wait.

The local authority's guideline, as laid down by paragraph 9.14 of the SEND Code of Practice (PDF), is that they:

**'...should consider whether there is evidence that despite the early years provider, school or post-16 institution having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress.'**

In Chapter 1.17 of the Code of Practice it says: **'A child's parents, young people, schools and colleges have specific rights to request a needs assessment for an EHC plan and children and their parents and young people should feel able to tell their school or college if they believe they have or may have SEN.'**

The Local Authority may well want evidence in addition to your views so ensure that you have copies of any reports that may have been undertaken on your child or young person, the diagnosis, and any reports from the school.

The special needs don't need to be proved at this stage, as under S36(8) of the Children and Families Act 2014, it says the local authority must secure an EHC needs assessment for the child or young person if, after having regard to any views expressed and evidence submitted under subsection (7), the authority is of the opinion that:

the child or young person has or may have special educational needs, and it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan.

So, make sure that you have gathered all the relevant information you have which you think will help.

**If the local authority decides not to carry out an assessment you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.**

If they do decide to carry out an assessment, the process moves on to the next step.

### **Step 3. Assessment**

At this point the local authority gathers as much information as they can about your child or young person's situation and needs. You may have been allocated a dedicated caseworker from the local authority as your key point of contact.

**They may ask for information from:**

- \*You and/or your child or young person.
- \*your child or young person's school, college or other educational setting.
- \*Health care professionals.
- \*An educational psychologist.
- \*Social services.
- \*Any person you ask them to contact, as long as they agree it's a reasonable suggestion.
- \*Anyone else they think is necessary.

The deadline for replying to the local authority is **within six weeks** of being contacted.

Once they have all the information, your local authority then holds its first major meeting to decide whether they need to make provision for special educational needs in an EHCP.

It is a good idea to consult your local authority SEND Local Offer website for information on how this process is managed in your area.

If they decide it's not necessary, they must inform you within sixteen weeks of the original request for assessment. This should include telling you that you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal if you don't agree with their decision.

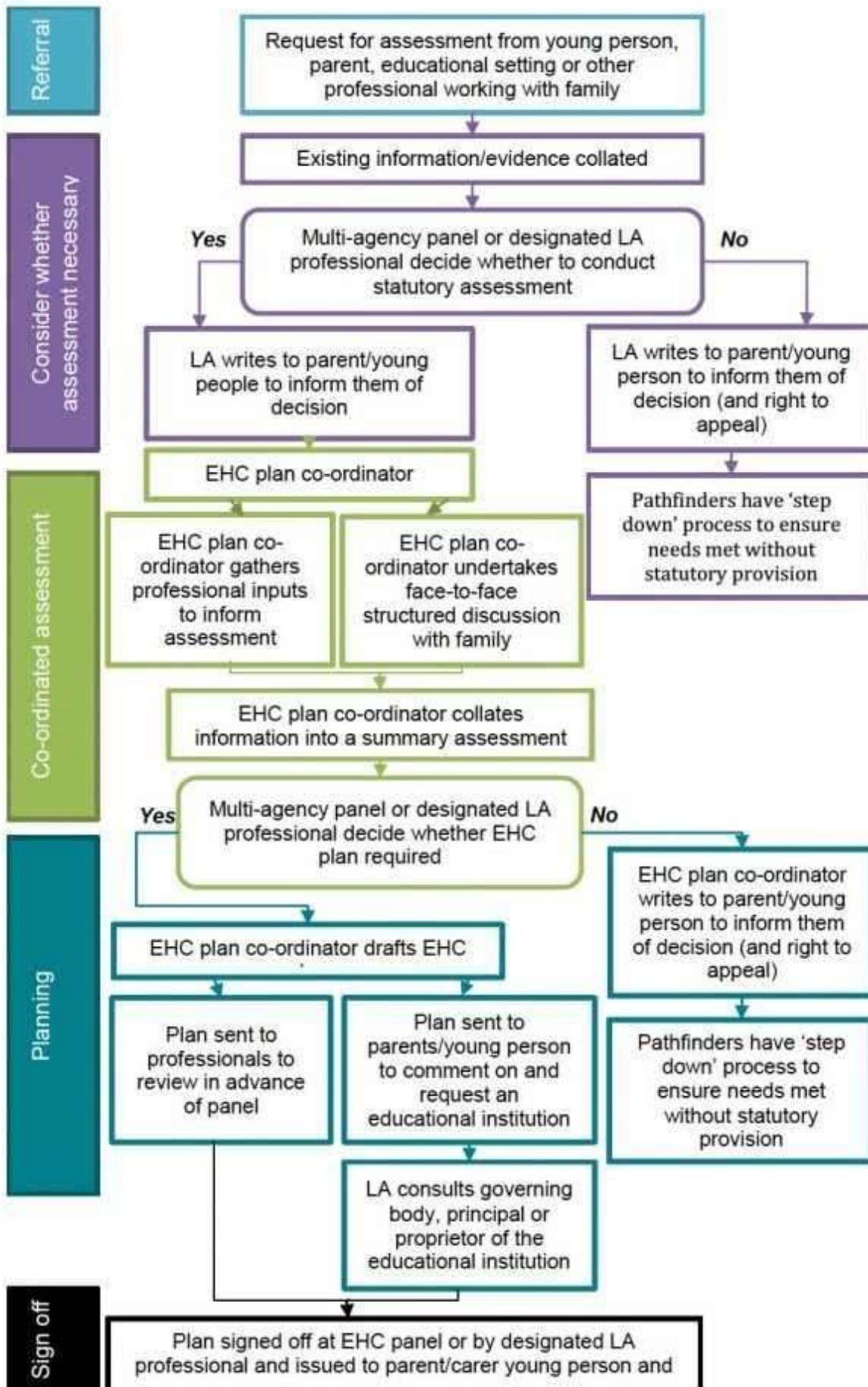
If they do decide it's necessary, the next stage is drafting the EHCP.

### **Step 4. Drafting the EHCP**

Once it's agreed that an EHCP should be drafted, there will be a second meeting held to fill it in. At this meeting decisions should be made in partnership with you and your child or young person. This can be a major opportunity to influence things, so it's a good idea to have researched providers and services in your local authority Local Offer beforehand. You may also want to talk things through with a charity like Information, Sendiass (formerly called Parent Partnership) who may be able to send a representative to assist you during the meeting. If you want a representative, it's wise to ask them as far in advance as possible.

**PLEASE DON'T LET ANYBODY PUT YOU OFF FROM APPLYING FOR AN EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN, YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD BETTER THAN ANYBODY. IF THE LEA SAY NO, YOU CAN ALWAYS APPEAL AT TRIBUNAL, IPSEA ARE THE PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP AND SUPPORT YOU WITH THIS. JUST SO YOU ARE AWARE, 98% OF PARENTS WHO APPEAL THE DECISION OF AN EHCP WIN AT TRIBUNAL!**

Figure 1 The EHC planning pathway



## TAF MEETING (TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY)

**PURPOSE-** To bring together different agencies into one meeting where there are concerns about a child or a family identified within a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – but not enough for statutory intervention – to source support services and agree an Action Plan for implementation.

**IN ENGLISH FOR US NORMAL FOLK-** A meeting between the family and different professionals to find support and help for a family, parents or children who might need a bit of extra help. During the meeting, an “Action Plan” will be agreed between everyone; for example, the health visitor will make a referral to Speech Therapy by X date. Or the sendco will contact the ASD team by X date.

### **Who will attend:**

- Parent(s)
- Child/ren (where age-appropriate)
- Social Worker (if you have one)
- Whichever agencies are involved. This might be midwife, health visitor, school nurse, nursery teacher, schoolteacher, special educational needs teacher, speech therapist, CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service) and/or any other support worker who might be working with your family or able to offer extra support. You should know everyone at the meeting.

**Parental involvement:** Whilst the social worker/sendco/family worker is likely to “take charge” and chair the meeting, it can only go ahead with the full permission of the parent/s. You **should** be involved in the planning of the meeting, for example, who you think should attend.

**Child/ren involvement:** The child/ren should also be fully involved in the meeting process, but only where this is age appropriate. There’s no hard and fast rule to this, as one child at the age of ten might be able to understand what’s happening, compared to another child of the same age who might not. The general rule though is that nursery age children and young primary age children would not ordinarily be too involved.

## FAMILY FUND

Children and young people do not need a diagnosis to meet Family Fund criteria; but their additional support needs must arise from a disability or disabling condition.

Children and young people with additional support needs arising from a disability or disabling condition or with a serious or life limiting illness meet these criteria where:

- There is evidence that their additional needs impact on family’s choices and their opportunity to enjoy ordinary life; the degree of planning and support required to meet their needs are much greater than that usually required to meet the needs of children.

**and**

- They require a **high** level of support in three or more of Family Fund’s seven areas of support descriptors below.

**and**



- Their condition is long term or life limiting (by long term we mean lasting or likely to last 12 months or more).

### Family Fund seven areas of support

Your child should require support in at least **three** of the seven areas below:

- Personal care, supervision, and vigilance – we mean things like feeding, washing, toileting, a very high level of supervision.
- Access to social activities – we mean things like engaging socially and taking part in activities.
- Education – we mean the type of support that is given for learning and who gives it?
- Communication – we mean listening, speaking, and understanding.
- Therapy and medical treatment – we mean what treatment or therapy is given, who does this, how often and when?
- Specialist resources used - we mean things like wheelchair, oxygen, screen magnifier, electronic communication aid.
- The physical environment – we mean support with getting around and keeping safe.

You must also meet all our [general\\_eligibility\\_criteria](#).

**THIS IS ANOTHER MUST, YOU CAN APPLY ONCE A YEAR FOR A MAX OF £500, YOU CAN GET WASHERS, FRIDGES, IPADS, COMPUTERS, CLOTHES GARDEN FURNITURE AND MORE!!!**

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk/FAQs/are-we-eligible-to-apply>

## MERLINS MAGIC WAND

### What they do-

The Charity provide tickets and fund travel grants to families to enjoy their day at a Merlin Entertainments' attractions, such as LEGOLAND Resort® theme parks, SEA LIFE Centres, and Madame Tussauds.

On our magical days out, families have a chance to create long-lasting memories and take valuable time out from their stressful daily routine.

"Merlin's Magic on Tour" is spell number two, working with our local communities at hospitals and hospices to bring the magic to the children wherever they are and spell three is "Merlin's Magic Spaces" designing and creating amazing projects in hospitals, orphanages, learning Centres and more all around the world.

**WHEN CAN YOU APPLY**- Due to a high demand for tickets we only accept applications from those families/children/households we have not previously supported (regardless of when tickets were received previously and regardless of if those families have additional children with disabilities/illnesses).

**YOU CAN ONLY APPLY ONCE EVER!!!**

<https://www.merlinsmagicwand.org/>.

## CEA CARD

### WHAT IS A CEA CARD?

It's a cinema card for children aged 8 years plus and costs £6. with this card any carer that goes to the cinema with the child gets to go FREE

## WHOS ELIGIBLE?

You will need to provide evidence for the card holder of one of the following:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)
- Severely Sight Impaired Registration (formerly Registered Blind)
- Sight Impaired Registration (formerly Partially Sighted)

You will need to send a copy of the awarding letter from DWP or a statement confirming receipt of the allowance for **the person requiring assistance** (the card holder).

This should be dated within the last 12 months.

Alternatively, for Severely Sight Impaired (formerly Registered Blind) or Sight Impaired (formerly Partially Sighted) then please send a photocopy of registration for **the person requiring assistance** (the card holder).

**Please note that ESA (Employment and Support Allowance) or the Blue Badge on its own are not accepted as proof of eligibility.**

To apply, the person requiring assistance must be 8 years of age or older.

## DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA)

### WHAT IS DLA?

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who:

- is under 16.
- has difficulties walking or needs much more looking after than a child of the same age who does not have a disability.

They will need to meet all the [eligibility requirements](#).

The DLA rate is between £26.90 and £101.75 a week and depends on the level of help the child needs.

Care component	Weekly rate	Level of help you need
Lowest	£26.90	Help for some of the day or with preparing cooked meals

Care component	Weekly rate	Level of help you need
Middle	£68.10	Frequent help or constant supervision during the day, supervision at night or someone to help you while on dialysis
Highest	£101.75	Help or supervision throughout both day and night, or a medical professional has said you might have 12 months or less to live

### If you have walking difficulties

You might get the mobility component of DLA if, when using your normal aid, you:

- cannot walk.
- can only walk a short distance without severe discomfort.
- could become very ill if you try to walk.

You might also get it if you:

- have no feet or legs.
- are assessed as 100% blind and at least 80% deaf and you need someone with you when outdoors.
- are severely mentally impaired with severe behavioural problems and get the highest rate of care for DLA.
- need supervision most of the time when walking outdoors.
- are certified as severely sight impaired and you were aged between 3 and 64 on 11 April 2011

Mobility component	Weekly rate	Level of help you need
Lower	£26.90	Guidance or supervision outdoors

Mobility component	Weekly rate	Level of help you need
Higher	£71	You have any other, more severe, walking difficulty

Care component	Weekly rate
Lowest	£22.65
Middle	£57.30
Highest	£85.60

Mobility component	Weekly rate
Lower	£22.65
Higher	£59.75

### How DLA for children is paid

DLA is usually paid every 4 weeks.

All benefits, pensions and allowances are [paid into your bank, building society or credit union account](#).

### Extra help

You might qualify for [Carer's Allowance](#) if you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a child who gets the middle or highest care rate of DLA.

Telephone: 0800 121 4600

Textphone: 0800 121 4523

[NGT text relay](#) (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 121 4600

Monday to Friday, 8am to 7.30pm

**YOUR CHILD DOES NOT NEED A DIAGNOSIS TO CLAIM DLA, THEY JUST NEED TO HAVE A DISABILITY. AS AWFUL AS IT SOUNDS YOU NEED THE WHOLE FORM FILLING OUT ABOUT EVERYTHING YOUR CHILD CAN'T**

DO AND HOW THEY STRUGGLE. PICK THEIR WORST NIGHTS SLEEP, THE DAYS THEY NEED THE MOST HELP. GATHER AS MANY REPORTS AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN TO SEND IN AS EVIDENCE.

ALSO, IF YOU DO GET DLA REMEMBER TO RING TAXS CREDITS FOR THE DISABILITY ELEMENT TO BE ADDED.

## PERSONAL INDEPENDENT PAYMENT

### **What PIP is for**

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can help with extra living costs if you have both:

- a long-term physical or mental health condition or disability
- difficulty doing certain everyday tasks or getting around because of your condition.

You can get PIP even if you're working, have savings or are getting most other benefits.

### **How PIP works**

There are 2 parts to PIP:

- a daily living part - if you need help with everyday tasks.
- a mobility part - if you need help with getting around.

Whether you get one or both parts and [how much you get](#) depends on how difficult you find everyday tasks and getting around.

If you have less than 6 months to live, you'll automatically get the daily living part. Whether you get the mobility part depends on your needs. Find out [how to claim and how much you'll get if you have a terminal illness](#).

### **Daily living part**

You might get the daily living part of PIP if you need help with:

- eating, drinking, or preparing food
- washing, bathing, and using the toilet
- dressing and undressing
- reading and communicating
- managing your medicines or treatments
- making decisions about money
- socialising and being around other people.

### **Mobility part**

You might get the mobility part of PIP if you need help with:

- working out a route and following it
- physically moving around
- leaving your home

You do not have to have a physical disability to get the mobility part. You might also be eligible if you have difficulty getting around because of a cognitive or mental health condition, like anxiety.

### How difficulty with tasks is assessed

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will assess how difficult you find daily living and mobility tasks. For each task they'll look at:

- whether you can do it safely
- how long it takes you.
- how often your condition affects this activity.
- whether you need help to do it, from a person or using extra equipment.

Your carer could get [Carer's Allowance](#) if you have substantial caring needs.

### Eligibility

You can get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) if all the following apply to you:

- you're 16 or over.
- you have a long-term physical or mental health condition or disability.
- you have [difficulty doing certain everyday tasks or getting around](#)
- you expect the difficulties to last for at least 12 months from when they started.

You must also be under [State Pension age](#) if you've not received PIP before.

If you're over State Pension age, you can apply for [Attendance Allowance](#) instead. Or if you've received PIP before, you can still make a new claim if you were eligible for it in the year before you reached State Pension age.

### PIP amount

	Higher weekly rate	
Lower weekly rate		
Daily living part	£68.10	£101.75

	Higher weekly rate	
Lower weekly rate		
<hr/>		
Mobility part	£26.90	£71.00

---

## CARERS ALLOWANCE

You could get £76.75 a week if you care for someone at least 35 hours a week and they get [certain benefits](#).

You do not have to be related to, or live with, the person you care for.

You do not get paid extra if you care for more than one person.

Carer's Allowance can affect the [other benefits that you and the person you care for get](#). You have to pay tax on it if your income is over the [Personal Allowance](#).

### How you're paid

You can choose to be paid weekly in advance or every 4 weeks. It will be paid [into an account](#), for example your bank account.

## Your eligibility

All the following must apply:

- you're 16 or over.
- you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone.
- you've been in England, Scotland, or Wales for at least 2 of the last 3 years (this does not apply if you're a refugee or have humanitarian protection status)
- you normally live in England, Scotland or Wales, or you live abroad as a member of the armed forces (you might still be eligible if you're moving to or already living in an [EEA country or Switzerland](#))
- you're not in full-time education.
- you're not studying for 21 hours a week or more.
- you're not subject to **immigration control**
- your earnings are £139 or less a week after tax, National Insurance, and expenses.