



Useful Contacts

[Sunderland Carers Centre](#)

Many people do not recognise themselves as carers. They are parents, grandparents, children, partners, friends or neighbours doing what needs to be done to maintain the quality of life for those they are looking after. They may not realise that support is available to help them in their caring role.

Sunderland Carers' Centre offers confidential information, advice and support services to carers throughout the City of Sunderland (including Houghton-le-Spring, Hetton-le-Hole, Easington Lane and Washington).

What the Centre can offer?

Sunderland Carers' Centre can provide:

- Information and advice
- Support and a listening ear
- Support at meetings with health, social services and other agencies
- Support groups where carers can meet others in a similar situation
- Courses on a range of carer-related subjects
- Social activities to provide a break for carers
- Free newsletter every two months
- Opportunities to influence service development

Support and activities for young carers

If you cannot come to the Centre, staff can arrange to visit you at home or other suitable place.

If you work, staff can arrange to meet you outside normal office hours and at weekends.

www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk

[Autism Outreach Team](#)

The Autism Outreach Team (AOT) is a multi-disciplinary team based at Columbia Grange School, comprising of professionals from education, health and social care. These professionals include specialist support teachers, educational psychologist, speech and language therapists and paediatricians.

The AOT supports pupils attending mainstream schools with a diagnosis or possible diagnosis of ASD, by the delivery of quality outreach services and training in the field of ASD, so that wherever possible, pupils can successfully attend their local mainstream school

They can be contacted on [0191 2193863](tel:01912193863)

[Autism in Mind \(AIM\)](#)

AIM supports parents, carers and families who have children in both mainstream and specialist provision with or without a diagnosis.

The support offered includes helping families to fill in forms to claim disability living allowance for their children. On-line or telephone support for parents is also offered

www.autism-in-mind.co.uk

www.familiesinfoservices.com

Sunderland Families Information Service

The families information service (FIS) is for mothers, fathers and carers. It's for all families; whether you are expecting your first child or a parent of a teenager. It can provide information about all aspects of family life and also offer help, advice or signposting to other organisations.

The Families Information Service have produced a support guide which contains a vast amount of information for parents/carers of disabled children. We have a copy of this within school should you wish to look at it. Please contact Mrs Douglass or Mrs Wallbank who would be happy to loan it to you.

Family Care and Support Services

Family care and support services are a team of Quest, Family Care and Support and Leisure Link workers who undertake a wide range of tasks with children and young people and their families. This includes care tasks and support into leisure activities, either at home or in the community to enable the young people to engage in appropriate activities and for their families to have a break from caring.

Families can refer themselves, or get more information about services, by contacting a Duty Social Worker at the Children's Disability service during office hours. Telephone [0191 5613125](tel:01915613125)

Contact a Family

Contact a Family is a national charity aimed at helping families who care for children and young people with any disability or special need. There is a regional office in the North East which offers a range of services including signposting to services and local/national support groups; providing information about specific conditions and producing a wide range of publications and fact sheets on a variety of issues affecting families including free regional newsletters and email bulletins which advertise details of local events and services, leisure opportunities and national news items.

For more local information, contact Contact a Family on **0191 213 6300** or email on northeast.office@cafamily.org.uk

Nationally, Contact a Family also runs a Freephone Helpline offering advice on rights and entitlements and has recently launched the only country wide advice service for Special Educational Needs (SEN) - The SEN National Advice Service. This service will help families whose child may have special educational needs - they will be able to provide advice and information on any aspect of your child's education. Help is available through the helpline on **0808 8083555**. Alternatively you can send an email to helpline@cafamily.org.uk

[Sunderland Carers Centre](#)

If your child currently has a Statement of Educational Needs and you are going through the process of converting it into a new Educational Healthcare Plan (EHC), or you are starting the process of a new EHC, the Sunderland Carers Centre are now able to offer you Independent SEN Support to help you through this process

The aim of the support is to ensure that the needs and aspirations of families, children and young people are at the heart of the new process.

They can be contacted via the Sunderland carers' website and ideally they would prefer to work with families from the start so as to give you the best possible advice.

www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk

[Local Offer](#)

Local authorities must publish, in one place, information about provision they expect to be available in their area for children and young people from 0 to 25 who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

This is being referred to as the 'local offer'.

The local offer provides clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the support and opportunities that are available.

Simply type Sunderland Local Offer into your web browser to access this information

www.familyfund.org

Who we are

We are the UK's largest provider of grants to low-income families raising disabled and seriously ill children and young people. We help ease the additional pressures families face. We can help with essential items such as washing machines, fridges and clothing but can also consider grants for sensory toys, computers and much needed family breaks together.

*We give grants
to families raising disabled
and seriously ill children
aged 17 and under*

www.dwp.gov.uk

Many families with disabled children or young people are entitled to claim benefits. It is important to get good advice about which benefits to claim, and to get support in filling out the applications forms. Ask for a complete benefits check to make sure you are not missing out on anything. Information and advice is available from a qualified Benefits Advisor.

Benefit claim Line - Jobcentre Plus [0800 0556688](tel:08000556688). Calls are free from a landline.



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