



Aiming High in Nottinghamshire

DCATCH - Disabled Children's Access to Childcare

BULLETIN – JUNE/JULY 2010

Nottinghamshire County Council has been awarded Aiming High Pathfinder status by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, (DCSF), and funding until March 2011 to support working parents of disabled children, and those attending a vocational training course or returning to work.

Working with disabled children and their parents, the DCATCH project provides a fantastic opportunity for the Local Authority to work with families to develop new and innovative ways of improving childcare services for disabled children and young people.

Participation and Consultation

DCATCH has a section on the Speak-Up website where we put regular updates and news, etc. www.pps-speakup.org.uk

We have also started a DCATCH Virtual Network which parents/carers can sign up to which will enable us to consult with parents on an ongoing basis

Joint with Short Breaks

We now have 10 approved providers who can support both short breaks and childcare for disabled children and we have recently held 3 parent/carer events and 2 staff events to update people on the projects.

Approved Provider Framework

We have completed our joint tendering process to get new approved providers who can support both short breaks (Sitting & Befriending and Holiday & Play activities) and childcare for disabled children, in response to families' requests for consistency of workers.

There are 10 Approved Providers who, together, cover all areas of the county and children from 0-19years. This will be active as from 01/04/10.

The Brokerage Role

The team has set up over 25 individual childcare packages and are supporting many other families with their childcare requirements. We initially meet with families to discuss their childcare needs and then arrange individual childcare packages on their behalf. We remain as a link with the family throughout the project and attend any relevant reviews/meetings.

What we've done so far...

- Publicised the project throughout the county
- Over 100 families involved in the project for help with their childcare needs
- Consulted with childcare providers about the training they need to better support disabled children and commissioned training to increase their understanding of the needs of disabled children
- Attended events and parent groups throughout the county to tell them about our service
- Met with disabled children and young people to gather their views on childcare
- Agreed the hourly rate that parents supported by DCATCH will contribute towards the cost of their childcare (£3.50 per hour)
- We have developed the DCATCH Personal Organisers for children and young people to use as a record of their day and to plan activities whilst being supported by DCATCH

Next Steps....

- **Training** - we have commissioned training (January 2010 to March 2011) to support childcare practitioners to increase their understanding of the needs of disabled children
- **Feedback** – we are continuing to gather feedback from parents/carers and children/young people within the DCATCH Project about their childcare packages
- **Awareness** - we aim to make more families and professionals aware of the support available through DCATCH
- **Brokerage** – we will extend the Brokerage role within the Families Information Service (FIS)

MAY MARKETPLACE EVENTS

The DCATCH and Short Breaks Pathfinder teams held two Marketplace Events in May. These took place from 1:00pm to 9:00pm in Rushcliffe and Mansfield on 18th and 20th May.

A variety of organisations and support groups who provide services for disabled children, young people and their families attended the events, including our 10 approved providers.

The events were very well attended and the feedback from families was positive. Those attending stayed at the events for a considerable amount of time and two of the key comments were:-

- how useful it was to have all the information in one place, and to be able to attend throughout the evening with their children.
- more events like this in the future would be beneficial.

Questions and Answers

Q. If we meet your Eligibility Criteria can we use our Direct Payment worker?

A. Yes, we can support them to become registered on the voluntary part of Ofsted's Childcare Register and become a DCATCH Individual Home Based Childcare Worker.

Q. Are we eligible if one of us is employed and one of us is self employed?

A. Yes, as long as the childcare needed is for when you are both working.

Q. If my child does not fit your Eligibility Criteria exactly, but cannot access mainstream childcare would you be able to support me?

A. Speak to one of our team. All decisions will be made on a case by case basis.

Q. Can we choose who we would like to provide our childcare?

A. As part of setting up the package we will explore any options identified where possible – initially linking workers/services already connected to your child.

Q. Can you support us with childcare for our disabled child whilst we spend time with our other children?

A. No, this is classed as a short break. Speak to the Short Breaks team for further information.

For further information on DCATCH please contact:-
Jo Willis (Lead Officer) 07917 551381
Ruth Manterfield (Brokerage Manager) 07725 151006
Kate Harrall (Project Administrator) 01623 520071
Email: ahdcpathfinder@nottsc.gov.uk or
kate.harrall@nottsc.gov.uk

Parents as Trainers.....

Following the inspirational presentation by BILD (British Institute for Learning Disability) at the Parent/Carer Events, about 'Parents as Trainers' several parents expressed an interest in developing their skills so that they could participate in training by, for example, sharing their own story, helping to write a training course or perhaps delivering training.

Helene Torr from the Parent Partnership Service (PPS) is taking this forward in Nottinghamshire. If you wish to find out more about how you can become involved you can contact her by phone on 0115 948288 Mobile: 0785 2156570
Helene.torr@ppsnotts.org.uk

Quotes...



I'm a single parent, my son is 14 and on the Autistic Spectrum. No mainstream setting in my area could meet his needs. DCATCH found a worker to support my son at home. He is much happier and I don't have to take time off work.



My child has very complex needs. DCATCH ensured that her childcare workers received all the training needed to support her, taking into consideration the time needed for my child to build up a relationship with them and for me to feel confident leaving her with them. By DCATCH helping to cover the costs, I am able to work during school holidays.



My baby was diagnosed with very complex health needs. I contacted several settings who felt they could not meet his needs and I had to give up my job. DCATCH support my child with specialist workers who meet all of his needs. This is based in our home so if his health is not good I can continue to work.



My daughter is 16 and has learning difficulties so can't be left alone in the holidays. Her Grandparents are getting older and are not able to cope. DCATCH supported our direct payments worker to become an Individual Home Based Childcare Worker. She now has someone to take her out to join in with activities while I am at work, that she knows and is comfortable with.



My daughter is 12 with very complex health needs. My husband works away all week. I wanted to take an evening course but had no-one to care for her. I contacted Families Information Service who passed me onto DCATCH and now my childcare is covered by one of the approved providers.



DCATCH met me and my son to find out our childcare needs. They took our wishes into account and have linked us to the ideal person. This saved us hours of repeating our story.

