



# A Parent's Guide to Direct Payments

COUNCIL FOR  
DISABLED  
CHILDREN

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# What help is available to you if you choose direct payments.

Help is available in an accompanying Information Pack. The pack will help you through all the stages of employing a person to provide services for your child or will assist you in choosing a service most able to meet your child's needs.

## YOU CAN OBTAIN A PACK FROM:

Or from your local Social Services office.

Help is also available from your local **Social Services** or through a specialist disability team which carries out social work assessments on behalf of your local Social Services.

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## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO DIRECT PAYMENTS

The alternative way to provide services and support

If you would like to have more control over how your child's services are provided, you could consider using direct payments.

You can receive money to buy services from an organisation or employ a person instead of Social Services arranging the services for you. For example you could employ a carer to provide short breaks or respite care for your child or you could use direct payments to purchase a nursery placement.

## COULD THIS BE FOR YOU?

Who are Direct Payments paid to?

- Parents of disabled children (aged 0-17 years)
- Other adults who have a parental responsibility for a disabled child, for example, grandparents.

## WHAT CAN DIRECT PAYMENTS BE USED FOR?

Services which offer your child stimulation, new experiences and independence.

- Short breaks / respite care
- Day care placement
- Assistance to attend an activity e.g. Youth club.
- Personal care

## HOW DO YOU GET DIRECT PAYMENTS?

- Contact your local Social Services to ask for an assessment.
- The needs of your child and family will be assessed.
- Based on that assessment Social Services will decide if you meet their criteria for support services.
- If you do, you will be offered support services or instead, be offered Direct Payments to arrange and purchase your own services or a mixture of both.

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER?

If you choose to employ a person to provide your child with support and help you will need to know the following:

- The person cannot be a close relative.
- You will need to satisfy Social Services that the person you wish to employ is suitable. With the help of Social Services a number of checks, including a police check should be carried out to ensure the safety of your child.

If you think your child's needs can best be met by using direct payments to buy a place in a local service, such as a nursery or private residential unit, you will need to satisfy Social Services that your child is being offered a service which meets his/her needs and is safe.

Services which are run by local authorities are not covered by direct payments so, while you can choose a direct payment to replace them you cannot buy more of them.

Direct payments are an alternative way of receiving services you are assessed for. They do not count as income so they do not affect tax and benefits.



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