



Disability, pregnancy & parenthood



If you have a disability and are pregnant or have a small child, there are items available that may be able to help you take care of your child. This information sheet provides a guide to these items and details of other organisations that might be able to help.

You can also contact DLF's Helpline on **0845 130 9177** (M-F, 10 a.m-4 p.m.) for more information.

Useful products:

Baby monitors

Baby listening devices are similar to one-way intercoms as they enable sound or speech to be transmitted in one direction only. This enables a carer to hear if the baby is crying. Sound can be transmitted to a vibrating pad for parents who are deaf or hard of hearing. Some devices also incorporate a visual monitor.

To view, see *AskSARA*:

http://www.asksara.org.uk/group_products.php?groupid=2877&topic_id=403

Baby slings

Parents who are wheelchair users may find baby slings helpful to carry their baby. Look for one that you can easily get your baby in and out of. These are available from high-street stores.

Bath inserts & supports

These products are designed to rest on a standard bath and may assist parents who have difficulty bending over.

To view, see *Living made easy for children*:

<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children/bath-inserts-3453.htm>

Changing mats & tables

Changing mats with raised edges can be helpful for parents with limited dexterity as they can reduce the risk of the child rolling off the mat. Adjustable height changing tables can assist parents who use a wheelchair to change their child at an appropriate height.

To view, see *Living made easy for children*:

<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children/changing+tables+and+mats-3133/>

Child hip seat



This is a fabric belt with an integral semi-circular seat. It is designed to reduce the strain on the back of an adult carrying a small child as the weight of the child is redistributed away from the upper back, shoulders and arms to the waist. It is suitable for carrying children aged six months to three years.

Available from:

- Hippyck Ltd. Telephone: (01278) 434440 www.hippyck.com
- Spirit of Nature. Telephone: (0844) 801 9885 www.spiritofnature.co.uk

Cots

There are cots available which may be suitable for use by a parent with a disability. They include features such as clearance underneath the mattress platform for a wheelchair, powered height adjustment and a low mattress platform height.

To view, see *Living made easy for children*:

<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children/cots-accessible-for-disabled-parents-2834.htm>

Musical potties & sensors

Musical potties and accessories for standard toilets have integral electronic sensors. The sensors detect temperature increases or moisture and then play a tune. This can be helpful for parents with a visual disability.

To view, see *Living made easy for children*:

<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children/musical-potties-and-sensors-2891.htm>

Nappies: with Velcro or reusable tabs or pull-ups

Parents with reduced dexterity/motor skills report that using nappies with Velcro (or reusable) fastenings are helpful as they allow readjustments without ripping the nappy. Some parents also find pull-ups easier to manage. These are available from high-street stores.

Pillows & supports

There are a range of pillows and supports that can provide support to pregnant and breast-feeding mothers. These can be helpful for mothers with reduced mobility and dexterity in their upper limbs.

To view a range, see *Living made easy*:

<http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/bedroom/pillows-and-supports-605/>

Alternatively, there are a wide range of supports available on the high street.

Spoke guards



Spoke guards can be helpful for parents who are wheelchair users as they can prevent inquisitive little hands becoming caught in the spokes.

Available from:

- Gerald Simonds Healthcare Ltd. Telephone: (01296) 380200
www.gerald-simonds.co.uk
- RGK Wheelchairs. Telephone: (01543) 670077 www.rgklife.com
- Sunrise Medical. Telephone: (01384) 446688 www.sunrisemedical.co.uk
- Wheelie Factor. Telephone: (0845) 2990 386 www.wheeliefactor.co.uk

Squeaky shoes

Squeaky shoes enable parents who are blind or visually impaired to know where their child is. These are available from high street stores.

Wheelchair baby carrier



This baby carrier attaches to manual wheelchairs to enable parents to push their children. It is suitable for babies from 4-5 months old.

Features

- folding tubular frame
- release lever
- reclining seat
- safety straps
- optional rain cover

Available from:

- Bath Institute of Medical Engineering (BIME). Telephone: (01225) 824103
www.bime.org.uk

No equipment commercially available?



BIME design innovative assistive technology solutions to help disabled people of all ages where there is currently no equipment available to help. This is for situations where the solution might benefit several people rather than just an individual. The charity employs a team of graduate design engineers and support staff who work closely with medical and healthcare professionals, and importantly with disabled people themselves to test out prototypes and guide their work. Once a design has been shown to be successful, it is developed for production. Some designs are licensed to reputable manufacturers, but many are manufactured through their own Production Unit. As BIME are a non-profit organisation, their products are sold at the same price as they cost to make.

Contact details:

Website: www.bime.org.uk

Telephone: 01225 824103

Email: info@bime.org.uk



DEMAND is an independent charity who design and manufacture bespoke, one-off items of equipment for disabled people, where no off the shelf solutions exist. They do not charge clients for their services. DEMAND also offer refurbished equipment for sale - the proceeds from the sales of these items goes directly towards their charity work helping those with special needs. They also have a repair and refurbish service, and are able to recycle unwanted equipment, often using components for new products.

Contact details:

Website: www.demand.org.uk

Telephone: 01923 681800 (South) or 01484 666261 (North)



Remap is a national charity, working through a network of volunteers. Remap has 85 panels across England, Wales and northern Ireland, and helps over 3000 people with disabilities each year. The volunteers use their skills to help people with disabilities to achieve much-desired independence in some aspect of their lives, or to enjoy leisure opportunities previously closed to them. They do this by making unique, tailor-made pieces of special equipment which are given free to the people who need them. As with MERU, REMAP do not take on projects where a ready-made solution can be obtained.

Contact details:

Website: www.remap.org.uk

Head office telephone: 0845 130 0456

To find your nearest office, visit this link: www.remap.org.uk/contact-us.php

Other organisations:

The following organisations can offer support for parents with disabilities.

CHANGE - Parents Network

CHANGE is a national equal rights organisation led by disabled people. Their parents' network enables parents to link up with others. They produce a newsletter and a range of books on parenting.

Web: <http://www.changepeople.co.uk/showPage.php?id=17>

Phone: 0113 3880011

Deaf Parenting UK

Deaf Parenting UK is made up of interested organisations and individuals to provide a forum to discuss deaf parenting issues.

Web: <http://www.deafparent.org.uk>

Phone (SMS): 07789 027186

Disability, Pregnancy & Parenthood International

Disability, Pregnancy & Parenthood international (DPPi) is a UK based registered charity, controlled by disabled parents, which promotes better awareness and support for disabled people during pregnancy and as parents.

Web: <http://www.dppi.org.uk/>

Phone: 0800 018 4730

Textphone: 0800 018 9949

Disabled Parents Network

Disabled Parents Network (DPN) is a national organisation of and for disabled people who are parents or who hope to become parents, and their families, friends and supporters. DPN provides information, advice and peer support to disabled parents, their families and supporters.

Web: <http://www.disabledparentsnetwork.org.uk>

Phone: 0300 3300 639

Occupational Therapy

The aim of occupational therapy is to enable individuals to live as independently as possible. Occupational therapists can help individuals to adapt to changes in their everyday life and to overcome practical problems. They may do this by providing advice, recommending ways an everyday task can be done differently or recommending equipment or alterations for an individual's home.

To enquire about an assessment with an occupational therapist contact your local social services. You can obtain their contact details by entering your postcode on the directgov website:

<http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/index.jsp?LGSL=209&LGIL=8&ServiceName=Find%20out%20about%20a%20needs%20assessment%20by%20social%20services>

Alternatively, if you wish to obtain private assessment or advice then you can search for a private occupational therapist on the College of Occupational Therapy's online directory of independent occupational therapists:

<http://www.cotss-ip.org.uk/directory/search.htm>

Find out more through the British Association/College of Occupational Therapy: www.cot.co.uk

Ricability – Information for disabled parents

Ricability has produced a series of reports for disabled parents. Each report covers ease of use of specific models and where to go for further help and advice. Reports include pushchairs; highchairs; baby carriers; bottles, warmers & sterilisers and safety gates.

Web: http://www.ricability.org.uk/consumer_reports/parenting/

RNIB – Parents' place

Parents' Place is a safe place for parents and parents to be with a sight problem to share experiences and get hold of up to date and relevant parenting information.

Web:

http://www.rnib.org.uk/livingwithsightloss/copingwithsightloss/parentsplace/Pages/parents_place.aspx

Contact: parents@rnib.org.uk

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