

# Link-Upp (Birmingham)

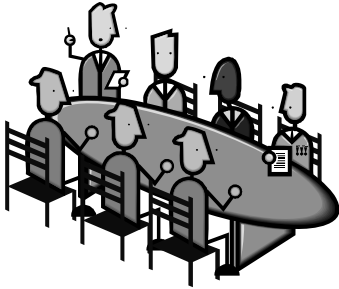
## Networking for Parent/Carer Groups

www.link-upp.org.uk

Issue 58

Jan/Feb 2010

### Link-Upp AGM



This years AGM will take place on Friday 26th February at the Mal Maison Hotel. Mal Maison is situated in the "Mailbox" and is easily accessible from the City Centre.

Link-Upp Family members, members of Link-Upp affiliated groups and Associate Members are all welcome to attend.

We start at 10 a.m. with hot drinks and pastries.

The business part of the meeting will start at 10.30 a.m.

There will be a buffet lunch at 12 noon.

In the afternoon we will be holding the "Link-Upp Parenting Awards" (see right).

It is essential that we know how many will be attending so please return the response form that will have been sent with this newsletter.

Send it to the usual Link-Upp address which can be found on page 4.

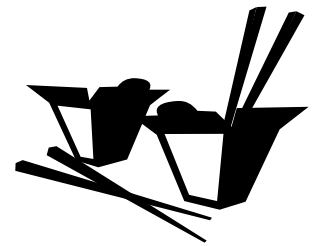
Please feel free to return all response forms and Parenting Award nomination forms in the same envelope. If you do not have a form, please reply by e-mail to [info@link-upp.org.uk](mailto:info@link-upp.org.uk) or leave a message giving your name and contact details on the Link-Upp mobile: 07767 086 417. Please reply by Friday 19th February.

### The Link-Upp Parenting Awards



We are now looking for nominations for our first Link-Upp Parenting Awards. A leaflet giving full details is enclosed with this newsletter, and will be available shortly on our website. The awards and prizes will be given out at the AGM, but even if you cannot attend, please take this opportunity to say "Thanks" to another parent or professional who has made a difference in your life. Please return forms by Friday 12th February.

### Link-Upp Annual Members' Meal.



**Date:** Tuesday 16th March 2010

**Time:** 12 noon OR 7.30pm

**Venue:** The Big Wok, Wrottesley Street Birmingham, B5 4RT (Near the Arcadian Centre)

**Cost:** £1 per person at lunchtime, £2 per person in the evening.

A chance to socialise with other Link-Upp members and enjoy a fine feast of Chinese food.

At lunchtime the restaurant offers approximately 60 dishes to choose from and in the evening you can enjoy the "Grand Buffet" with over 80 dishes and Japanese sushi.

**Please send the appropriate contribution, to be paid by cheque, before the event with the response form that has been sent with this newsletter. Make cheques payable to: LINK-UPP BIRMINGHAM.**

This event is for Link-Upp members, their partners (if you wish!) and members of Link-Upp affiliated groups.

*Any questions?* Call Link-Upp 0121 415 4445 or 07767 086 417

**There will be NO confirmation letter. If you have sent in the response form, you have a place.**

**Just turn up on the right day at the right time!**

**Please return the form by Friday 19th February**



**contact a family**  
for families with disabled children

## All change in the West Midlands Office.

We are glad to report that the West Midlands Office is up and running again as Contact a Family has secured 3 years funding from the Big Lottery. Contact a Family is a national charity which supports and gives advice and information to parents of children with disabilities. The office is in Prospect Hall, Selly Oak, and the phone number is: 0121 415 4624

Jan Eastwood is the new Regional Development Manager and her role is to support existing parent support groups and establish new groups. She will also be running workshops, training and events for parents. In particular she will be targeting isolated families, whether because of cultural and language barriers or because of rural isolation. Please contact her with suggestions for training or workshops. If you are part of a support group which could do with some help or are interested in setting up a new one she would love to hear from you. (e-mail: [jan.eastwood@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:jan.eastwood@cafamily.org.uk))

Liz Reynolds is the new Information Officer. During the coming months she will be updating the database and making sure all the information is accurate and up to date. If you would like to receive the forthcoming newsletter please let her know, and if you have received newsletters in the past and your circumstances have changed, please also get in touch. If you know of any support services, groups, and events etc which are happening in your area, we would love to hear from you! (e-mail: [elizabeth.reynolds@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.reynolds@cafamily.org.uk))

Amy is the Family Support worker who will provide advice and support for families on an individual basis. She can provide face to face, email or telephone help with such things as claiming benefits, linking with services which should be helping families, supporting parents at meetings, providing information about parents' rights as well as providing emotional support. She would also like to hear from families who are caring for a child with a rare disability or health condition who would be interested in being interviewed for a podcast. (Tel: 0121 329 2061, e-mail: [amy.turner@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:amy.turner@cafamily.org.uk))

Last but definitely not least Sarah Lee is the regional Parent Participation Officer (Together for Disabled Children). Many of you will know that previously she held the post of Regional Development Manager. Sarah's new remit is to provide support and information to parents and professionals to help with the development of successful parent involvement. Successful partnership between parents and professionals should then lead to improved local services for disabled children.

There are also two volunteer reps, Sonia Tooray who covers Birmingham and Rizwana Pathan who covers Warwickshire.

### *Something inspiring to read!*

#### **Families with disabled children celebrate family life despite facing bureaucracy and prejudice**

Families with disabled children have the same hopes and dreams as other families but often face bureaucracy and prejudice trying to achieve them.

That's the finding of a new Contact a Family report *Our family, our future* which features the stories of 30 UK families whose children are affected by a range of disabilities and rare conditions.

This is a truly inspirational report and can be found on the Contact a Family website at: [www.cafamily.org.uk/pdfs/ourfamilyourfuture.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/pdfs/ourfamilyourfuture.pdf)

The *Our family, our future* report is accompanied by an exhibition of photographs which will be touring the UK.

Contact a Family would like to see families with disabled children given the same opportunities as others and is calling for:

- The Government to invest in a campaign to raise awareness of the needs of families with disabled children
- Stronger focus on disability awareness taught in early years and schools
- People working in a public facing role to be given disability and equality training - so that they can recognise the unique talents that children bring - because of their disability.





<http://www.resourcesforautism.org.uk/>

This website gives information about many resources useful for parents of children that fall within the Autistic Spectrum, plus full listings of all "Resources for Autism" activities going on in Birmingham. It also lists job opportunities with the organisation.

The local contact for Resources for Autism is Lucy Pitt. Lucy can be contacted on: **07791 149 874** or by e-mail at: [Lucy@resourcesforautism.org.uk](mailto:Lucy@resourcesforautism.org.uk)

Resources for Autism are holding a **FAMILY FUN DAY** on Saturday 30th January from 1pm–4pm at Pipe Hayes Community Centre, Paget Road, Erdington, B24 OJP.

There will be refreshments and fun activities. There will also be a chance to pick up information and find out more about how they can help you. If you can't make the Fun Day, they are more than happy to give out information over the phone.



Funded By Birmingham Short Breaks

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## Free Laptop & Web Access - Home Access PC/Internet Grant

The government has made a grant of up to £528 available for low income families with children living in England; it's targeted at those without access to the internet.

Depending on your need you can get up to £528 to spend on a computer (laptop, desktop or netbook and one year's web access). Yet you cannot go anywhere, it's only retailers that operate the scheme, though these include mainstream providers such as Comet & Phones4u.

### Quick eligibility check

Have a look at the eligibility requirements below. You may be able to qualify for a Home Access grant if you:

- Answer yes to three questions in Section one **AND**
- Answer yes to at least one question in Section two

#### Section One:

Are you a parent or guardian responsible for and living with a child.....

...who is in school years 3 to 9?

...who attends a state-maintained school in England full time?

...who has not already had a computer from a Home Access Grant or similar programme, such as Computers for Pupils?

#### Section Two:

Do you receive at least one of the following?

- Free school meals for your child
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income support
- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and an income of less than £16,040
- Guaranteed Pension Credit (not Savings Credit)
- Income-based Employment Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

### How many people can get it?

The scheme is due to run for the next 18 months but there is a maximum of 270,000 grants available, one per household. There are currently no plans to extend it across the rest of the UK.

### How to apply?

If you are a parent and think you are eligible for a Home Access grant simply call the Home Access Grant Helpline on **0333 200 1004** to get an application form or check details at the Home Access website: <http://www.homeaccess.org.uk/> though by definition many of the people who are eligible for this grant won't have computer access, so please help spread the word.





www.link-upp.org.uk

# CONTACT US



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## face2face

It is with great pleasure that Link-Upp can announce the completion of Face2Face foundation training by a further 6 parents.

**Congratulations go to Beatrice, Michelle, Niru, Saeeda, Taleem and Violet.**

They will be joining the Birmingham team of 9 befrienders whose aim is help those parents who are finding it hard to make positive emotional adjustments to the news that their child has a disability or additional need.

If you want anymore information about Face2Face check out the website :  
[www.face2facenetwork.org.uk](http://www.face2facenetwork.org.uk)



## Parent Views Count: Parents Open Meetings. Feb & March 2010.



The next Parent Views Count Meeting will be held at Carrs Lane Church Centre on **Thursday 4th February**. The meeting will start at 10am with a light lunch at 12noon. This meeting is only for parents of young people who are aged approximately 14 (Year 9 at school) up to 25. The subject is "TRANSITION" and parents will be looking at the provision and processes already in place and how they can be improved. It is hoped that the usual advice surgeries will be available, with the appropriate information for the older children.

The March meeting will be open to all parents and carers of a child or young person with a disability or additional need.

The evening meeting will be on **Wednesday 10th March** from 7pm—9pm.

The day-time meeting will be on **Thursday 11th March** from 10am—12.30pm.

Parents Views Count want to thank you for your time in attending the Carrs Lane meetings and other events or activities you may attend on behalf of PVC and to ensure that any costs you incur in attending are reimbursed. Until recently this has been done through the payment of vouchers.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 PVC have had to change the way in which they do this. PVC have introduced a new system for reimbursing any out of pocket costs you incur (e.g travel, childcare etc).

All out of pocket expenses can be reimbursed to you. An expense claim form needs to be completed. Please ensure that you bring receipts for all costs incurred ( e.g bus tickets, childcare invoices etc ).

They will be offering lunch at some Carrs Lane meetings in the future in order to thank you for your ongoing time and commitment to Parents Views Count.

**NOTE:** Parent Views Count has a new website: <http://parentviewscount.org/>

### FREEPHONE HELPLINES

**Contact a Family helpline: 0808 808 3555.**

The Contact a Family freephone helpline is staffed by experienced advisers and is a one stop shop for parents and other family members caring for a disabled child. The helpline is open Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm. It is also open on Monday evenings, 5.30-7.30pm. The helpline has access to interpreters in over 170 languages. You can also e-mail enquiries to: [helpline@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cafamily.org.uk)

**SCOPE RESPONSE: 0808 800 33 33**

Email: [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk) Text: SCOPE, plus your message to 80039

Scope offers a good combination of local knowledge and national disability expertise, providing free, impartial and expert information, advice and support to disabled people and their families. Available 9am - 5pm weekdays and closed at weekends and Bank Holidays.

#### Disclaimer

The editor retains the right to omit, include or edit any contributions. The views and suggestions in this newsletter are those of individual contributors and not necessarily supported by Link-Upp. Link-Upp cannot accept responsibility for any goods or services mentioned in or enclosed in this newsletter.

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