



Specialist support is out there for parent carers

Parents of children with additional needs are first and foremost parents. But they are also unpaid carers – and often don't know it.

An unpaid carer is anyone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not manage otherwise because of frailty, illness or disability.

Life as a parent who cares for a child with additional needs can be challenging, exhausting and relentless. Caring can be 24/7. Parent carers rarely think about their own health and wellbeing, as they strive to provide the best for their children.

There is support available. At the charity Carers' Resource, we help parent carers to solve their problems. We give them information, help them navigate systems (care, disability benefits and funding, to name a few) and give them emotional support. We also signpost parent carers to other organisations as needed.

During coronavirus we are still offering this support across the Bradford district (and North Yorkshire), but it is by telephone rather than face-to-face. Video calling is an option, as is text messaging and emails, and information can be sent through the post where necessary.

Parent carers can access additional support through our Facebook groups if they are registered with us. Up-to-date information is posted regularly and parent carers are able to support one another:

Bradford East, South and West - www.facebook.com/groups/157917568953502/
Shipley and Keighley - www.facebook.com/groups/522702365299344/

We are also working on delivering online workshops/sessions in the near future. Some will be pre-recorded, some live, and others interactive. Subjects will include completing DLA and PIP forms, a virtual coffee, cake and chat and other content and themes that carers tell us they need. If they are successful we will carry them on beyond lockdown, as we hope they will be accessible for carers who cannot get out and about easily.

Carers' Resource can help any carer, whether they have just started to care for another person or whether they have been doing it for years, whether the cared-for

person lives with them or not, whether they care for just a few hours a week or round-the-clock, and whether they have £1 or £1m in their bank account.

Parent carers, any other type of unpaid carer, or professionals can refer into our services by filling out a form here: www.carersresource.org/contact/ or by calling 01274 449660 (option 1).