



May 2015

I would like to introduce the Independent Support Service for your local authority area.

As part of the SEND code of practice introduced in September 2014, the Together Trust has been awarded funding to provide additional support for parents/carer, children and young people through the EHC process. See below sections of the code of practice 2.20 & 9.29.

2.20 Families may receive help from an independent supporter, provided by private voluntary and community sector organisations, who is independent of the local authority. Independent supporters will be recruited locally and receive accredited training, including legal training, to help any family going through an EHC needs assessment and the process of developing an EHC plan. Local authorities should work with organisations that are providing independent supporters to ensure there are arrangements agreed locally to offer help from an independent supporter to as many families as possible who require it.

*9.29 Local authorities **must** provide all parents, children and young people with impartial information, advice and support in relation to SEN to enable them to take part effectively in the assessment and planning process. This will include the EHC needs assessment process, EHC plans and Personal Budgets (including the take-up and ongoing management of direct payments). This should include information on key working and independent supporters as appropriate. (See Chapter 2 for more information.)*

We can support and provide information in a variety of ways including assisting with paperwork, gathering information, support in meetings and also looking at goals and aspirations to ensure the views, wishes and feelings of the child and his or her parent, or the young person are included as stated in section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Parents can contact us direct or we can take referrals from any professional who recognises the need for support. Referrals can be made to isduty@togethertrust.org.uk or by phoning **07557801954** and asking for a member of the Independent Support team.

I have attached leaflets for more information regarding Independent Support and also details of workshops we can deliver for children and young people and parent/carers which explain the new Education, Health and Care plan processes, all services are fully funded and free of charge.

Please see the link below for further information on Independent Support.

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/independentsupport>

Kind regards

Lisa Grundy
Independent Supporter Service Manager



Independent Support services

Humphrey Booth Day Centre, The Hub, Taylorson Street, Ordsall, Salford M5 3EX T 0755 7801 954 E isduty@togethertrust.org.uk

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Education Health and Care Plan Workshops

The Together Trust Independent Supporters have been funded by the Council for Disabled Children to work in your local authority to support children, young people and their families through the new Education, Health and Care Plan process.

We have developed a range of workshops which explain the new Education, Health and Care plan process and we will focus on goals and aspirations and how young people can get their views and wishes represented in their plan. We have a workshop for primary and secondary aged children which have been developed in partnership with young people to make them fun and interactive. We also have a workshop for parents/carers.

Children / Young People's Workshop

The workshop has an easy to understand overview of the Education, Health and Care plan process. The session also includes activities that look at individual's goals and aspirations and how to get these included in the plan.

Parents / Carer Workshop

The workshop explains how the new Education, Health and Care plan works, the processes, timelines and how best to ensure the child/young person's view, wishes and feelings are included. It also looks at the practical aspects of what forms you may receive and how to complete them.

If you, your child or young person are interested in participating in one of these workshops then please contact us on:

Tel: 0755 7801 954

Email: isduty@togethertrust.org.uk

If you have started to go through the Education Health Care Plan process and would like help, advice and support from an Independent Supporter then please contact us using the contact details above.



The Together Trust's Independent Support services offer free, independent and impartial advice, which is tailored to meet the needs of children, young people and parents/carers going through the EHC process.



Independent Support



An Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan brings a child or young person's education, health and care needs into one single document.

What is an Independent Supporter?

An Independent Supporter (I.S.) is a qualified individual that works independently from the Local Authority to support children, young people (0-25) and their parent/ carers to understand and fully participate in the Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan process.

What support can an I.S. offer?

An EHC Plan brings a child or young person's education, health and care needs into one single document. An I.S. will ensure that their voice is heard throughout the EHC process and support them by providing:

- Impartial information about your Local Offer.
- Help to children/parents /carers and young people to understand the EHC assessment process and the implementation of the EHC Plan.
- Support with completion of forms that support the EHC process.
- Signposting to those eligible for additional support to other agencies and services.
- Information that will empower families to make choices.
- Information regarding Personal Budgets.
- Attendance at reviews and EHC focused meetings.

How do you get more information?

The Together Trust operates its I.S. services in 6 areas across Greater Manchester. If you live in the areas of Bolton, Oldham, Salford, Manchester, Tameside or Bury - you can find further information about our services by visiting your Local Authority website and accessing your Local Offer or alternatively contact your local IASS (formerly Parent Partnership). IASS services are a statutory service that provides impartial information, advice and support for disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

If you are interested in gaining the help of an Independent Supporter please ring **0755 7801 954** and an Independent Supporter will guide you through the steps you will need to take to access this support.

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