

WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS ABOUT

This chapter gives brief details about some of the state benefits that you and/or your child may be entitled to. Some other benefits, such as Income Support, carry extra premiums if you have a disabled child.

To find out whether you and/or your child are eligible for particular benefits, you should contact your local Department for Work & Pensions office (offices are given in the business section of your Phone Book under JobCentre Plus/Benefits Agency). Your nearest office should be able to supply booklets giving more details about the benefits mentioned here and the relevant claim forms. You can also get detailed information from the Department for Work & Pensions website: www.dwp.gov.uk

Benefits Enquiry Line 0800 882200

Staff on the Benefits Enquiry Line can give you information and advice about what benefits you and your child may be eligible for. They will not have access to your personal papers, so can only give you general advice.

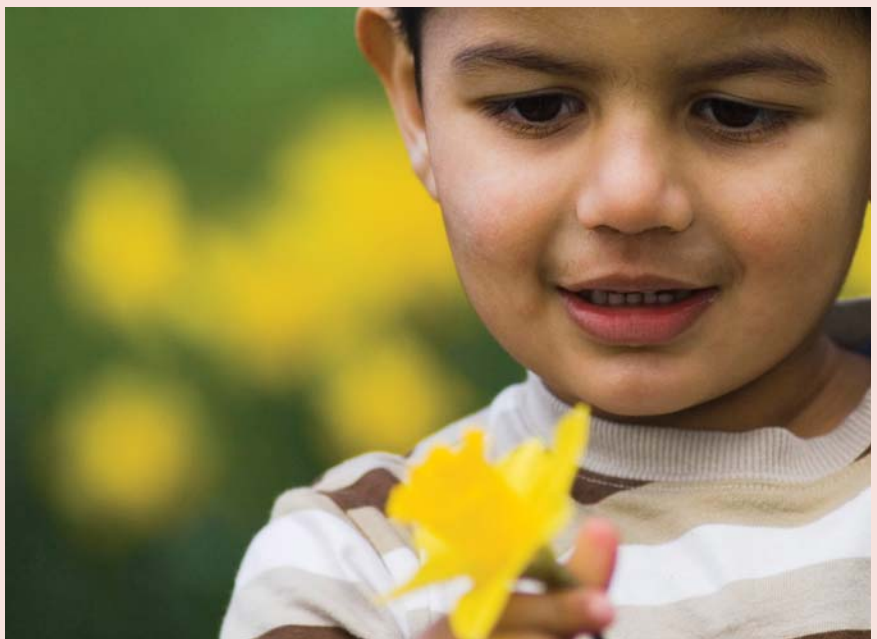
DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA)

You can claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for a child aged three months or over and under 16 if they have a physical or mental illness or disability that means they need more help or looking after than other children of the same age.

DLA is split into two parts, one for the care needed (the 'care component') and one to help if someone has difficulty walking or needs extra help getting around (the 'mobility component'). There are three rates of the care component and two of the mobility component, depending on the severity of your child's disability. You can claim for the care component of DLA when your child is three months old, and for the mobility component when your child is three if he or she has severe difficulty walking.

DLA is not affected by savings or any other income you are getting.

website www.dwp.gov.uk



CARER'S ALLOWANCE (CA)

The Carer's Allowance (CA) is a taxable benefit that can be paid to people over 16. The amount you get is not affected by any savings you may have, but can affect some other benefits you may be getting. To qualify you should be spending at least 35 hours a week looking after your child, and your child should be getting the middle or highest rate care component of DLA.

website www.dwp.gov.uk

VACCINE DAMAGE PAYMENTS

If your child has become severely disabled as result of vaccination they may be entitled to a one-off payment.

WORKING TAX CREDIT (WTC) PAYMENTS

Working Tax Credit (WTC) is for people who are in paid work for 16 or more hours a week. You can be married, unmarried, living with a partner, or a lone parent, and either self-employed or working for an employer.

The childcare element of Working Tax Credit is to help towards the cost of childcare.

CHILD TAX CREDIT

Child Tax Credit works in conjunction with Working Tax Credit, and is for people who have at least one child. There is a family element, that is payable to any family responsible for a child, and a child element for each qualifying child you are responsible for. The child element is paid at a higher rate if the child has a disability, and at an enhanced rate for a child with a severe disability (the disabled child element).

For more information about Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

- contact your local Inland Revenue Enquiry Centre (see your Phone Book)
- website www.hmrc.gov.uk
- phone the Tax Credit Helpline: 0845 300 3900 (7 days a week 8am-8pm)



OTHER FINANCIAL HELP

The Family Fund

The Family Fund helps families of disabled or seriously ill children under 16, giving grants and information relating to the care of the child.

Grants can be for such things as holidays, leisure, laundry equipment, driving lessons etc. Applications from families whose income is entirely from benefits, or whose gross income from employment is £23,000 a year or less will be considered.

Family Fund

Unit 4, Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive
Huntington, York YO32 9WN
tel 0845 130 4542
website www.familyfund.org.uk

Other organisations that can help

Some specialist organisations can also provide financial help (relevant details are given in the entries in Chapter 7) and so can some charities. You can find further details in *The Charities Digest*, published by Waterlow Information Services, or *The Voluntary Agencies Directory*, published by NCVO. Both of these can be found in reference libraries – and both can be difficult to use! Ask the library staff for guidance.