

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND ALTERATIONS TO YOUR HOME

### WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS ABOUT

To help your child lead as independent a life as possible you may need special equipment at home – either for him or her to use, or to help you – or you may need to make alterations to the structure of your home. This chapter tells you how you can get advice about equipment, see it and try it out, and where you should go for information and advice if you need to make alterations to your home.

### ADVICE AND INFORMATION

#### Individual help

There are many gadgets and pieces of equipment that can help your child – ranging from small gadgets to large items like hoists that will help you to lift him or her out of bed. There are also many items that can help if your child has sight and/or hearing problems.

You can get information and advice about equipment to help with physical problems (such as lack of mobility) from an occupational therapist, and from specialist advisers for problems with sight or hearing. Both occupational therapists and specialist advisers can carry out an assessment of what your child can and can't do and can give you advice, information and practical suggestions for equipment that would be useful, or for alternative ways of doing things.

For information about equipment or to arrange to see an occupational therapist, contact Hampshire OT Direct on 0845 4555, email [otdirect.hants.gov.uk](mailto:otdirect.hants.gov.uk). There is no charge for this, and an OT or adviser will visit you and your child at home – but you may have to wait for an appointment. You can also make an appointment to see someone at any of the disability information centres listed below, where you can try out equipment.



## PLACES WHERE YOU CAN GET ADVICE AND SEE AND TRY EQUIPMENT

All the centres listed here like you to phone before visiting to check that they have the kind of things that you are looking for and/or to make an appointment .

**Basingstoke Disability Information Centre**  
19-20 Westminster House, Festival Place  
Basingstoke RG21 1LS  
tel 01256 814682  
open Mon-Fri 9.30am-2.30pm

**Gosport Disability Information Centre**  
The Old Chapel, St George's Walk, Gosport PO12 1FH  
tel 023 9258 0373  
open Mon-Thurs 10am-3pm

**Havant Age Concern Information and Resource Centre**  
14 Market Parade, Havant PO9 1QF  
tel 023 9247 2452  
open Mon-Fri 10am-3.30pm

**Petersfield Disability Resource Centre**  
Ramscote, Ramshill, Petersfield GU31 4YZ  
tel 01730 231418  
open Mon-Fri 8.30am-5pm

**Portsmouth: DOVE**  
85, Northern Road, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 3AH  
tel 023 9278 7788  
website [www.d-o-v-e.org](http://www.d-o-v-e.org)

**Disabled Living Foundation (DLF)  
Equipment Demonstration Centre**  
380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU  
open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm  
phone for an appointment: 020 7289 6111 ext 247

DLF helpline 0845 130 9177  
website [www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

*The DLF provides information and advice about equipment. It has a large Equipment Demonstration Centre in London, and you can make an appointment to look around the Centre with an adviser giving you one-to-one advice and information. Please note that you can't buy, hire or borrow equipment from the Centre.*



## SPECIALIST SERVICES

### Custom-made aids

#### REMAP

Mary-Ann Mitchell, REMAP, D9 Chaucer Business Park, Kemsing, Kent TN15 6YU  
tel 0845 130 0456  
website [www.remap.org.uk](http://www.remap.org.uk)

*Custom-made aids for disabled people, including children. REMAP deals with things that aren't available commercially – for example, a specialised piece of equipment that will allow someone to play a particular sport.*

### Hearing problems

**Hearing & Balance Information Point**  
Audiology Department  
Royal Hampshire County Hospital  
Romsey Road, Winchester SO22 5DG  
tel 01962 824437

*This information point is not staffed, but has leaflets/ booklets on wide range of topics relating to hearing problems, balance problems, hearing aids etc. There is a small display of equipment.*

### Sight problems

**Southampton General Hospital: 023 8079 8737**  
Telephone advice and information service about sight-related issues.

#### BT Advice Line: 0800 919591

*Information about specially adapted phones. Free BT booklet about equipment and available services.*



## GETTING THE EQUIPMENT YOU NEED

### Where to go

- You can buy simple gadgets and equipment in **high street shops**.
- **Children's Services occupational therapists and specialist workers** can assess what your child needs and can loan you equipment.
- You can get advice about **buying a wheelchair** from the Red Cross: The Cavendish Centre, Winnall Close Winchester SO23 0LB tel 01962 865174
- You can find lists of local specialist stockists in the **Yellow Pages**. Look under 'Disability' and 'Mobility'.
- You can buy equipment by **mail order** (addresses below).
- You can buy, sell and exchange specialist disability equipment through the **Disability Equipment Register**, a non-profit making organisation which publishes a monthly magazine. They have a section for children's equipment.  
4 Chatterton Road, Yate, Bristol BS37 4BJ  
tel 01454 318818  
website [www.disabilityequipment.org.uk](http://www.disabilityequipment.org.uk)  
Send five first class stamps for a copy of their magazine.

### Equipment by mail order

#### Chester-Care

PO Box 5665, Lowmore Business Park  
Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 7QX  
tel 01623 757955  
website [www.homecraft-rolyan.com](http://www.homecraft-rolyan.com)

**Keep Able** run a mail order service and also have shops where you can see and buy equipment.

Keep Able mail order service and catalogues  
tel 08705 202122  
website [www.keepable.co.uk](http://www.keepable.co.uk)

Keep Able Superstores  
779-781 Wimborne Road, Moordown,  
Bournemouth BH9 2BD  
tel 01202 549121

11-17 Kingston Road, Staines TW18 4QX  
tel 01784 440044

Unit 7 Brighton Hill Centre (New ASDA store)  
Basingstoke RG22 4EH  
tel 01256 477 333

#### Promedics (useful gadgets)

Moorgate Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 4PB  
tel 01254 619000

## ALTERATIONS TO YOUR HOME

You may find that you need to make alterations to the structure of your house or flat to make everyday living easier for your son or daughter. This could range from installing a ramp, or widening doorways to allow a wheelchair through, to building an extension. If you are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance you may qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant to pay or help pay for alterations. Contact your local City, District or Borough Council Environmental Health Department (for your local council see the Phone Book).

You can get information and advice about what alterations to your home could be helpful from the occupational therapists at your local Children's Services office (see page 72). Once you know what you want you can get help and advice from your local Home Improvement Agency (HIA). Staff at your local HIA can help you apply for a grant from your local council, or, if you do not qualify for a grant, can suggest other means of funding the work.

### Home Improvement Agencies

#### Basingstoke & Deane

**Southern Focus Trust Community Support Services**  
The Orchard, White Hart Lane, Basingstoke RG21 4AF  
tel 01256 423880

#### East Hampshire

**East Hampshire Staying Put**  
Ramscote, Ramshill, Petersfield GU31 4YZ  
tel 01730 260180

#### Eastleigh & Southampton

**Southern Focus Trust Community Support Services**  
47-57 High Street, West End, Southampton SO30 3DQ  
tel 023 8046 2444

#### Fareham, Gosport, Havant & Portsmouth

**Southern Focus Trust Community Support Services**  
Focus Point, 116 Kingston Crescent  
Portsmouth PO2 8AL  
tel 023 9279 3000

#### Hart & Rushmoor

**Hart & Rushmoor Staying Put**  
1st Floor Council Offices, The Blackwater Centre  
12-14 London Road, Blackwater GU17 9AA  
tel 01276 608950

#### New Forest

**New Forest Care & Repair**  
65 Christchurch Road, Ringwood BH24 1DH  
tel 01425 478005