

Factsheet B6: Benefits for children and young people

Children under 16 with disabilities may be entitled to **Disability Living Allowance** if they need help from someone else to do things like walk, get dressed, use a toilet, or they need supervision and guidance to make sure they are safe. It is important to show that their needs are much greater than, or 'substantially in excess' of normal requirements of a child their age, as it is taken for granted that every child needs to have help or be supervised at some time, depending on how old they are.

The claim form is quite long but there is useful guidance at the start of the form, with suggestions for what information is helpful for the Department of Work and Pensions.

You can claim by phone 0800 121 4600 or online at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim (pages 9-27 of the claim form are for guidance).

You can make a claim for the care component of Disability Living Allowance from birth, and if awarded it will be paid from when the child is 3 months old (or immediately if they are terminally ill). A parent or guardian claims on the child's behalf.

You can make a claim for high rate mobility from 3 years old, and low rate mobility from 5 years old.



When children turn 16, they will be asked to claim **Personal Independence Payments** instead, because this new benefit has replaced Disability Living Allowance for adults. See our factsheet on Personal Independence Payment for further information.

Young people may also be entitled to claim some means-tested benefits in their own right from the age of 16. This includes **Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Tax Credits** or **Employment and Support Allowance**. If a claim is made, the parent or guardian will no longer receive Child Benefit or Child Tax Credit. It is worth getting advice about whether the household will be better or worse off as a result.

To claim Employment and Support Allowance they would need to be assessed as 'not fit for work'. Please read our Factsheet on Employment and Support Allowance which explains how the claim process works.

Young people who are in full-time education can also be awarded Employment and Support Allowance as long as they are also entitled to Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

Income Support can be claimed when still at school or non-advanced education (in other words a course of study that is not a university course) if

- a young person over 16 is also eligible for Carer's Allowance, or
- they are under 21 and disabled or deaf, in full-time non-advanced education or
- they are an orphan and no-one is legally responsible for them or looking after them



- they are living away from home and the parent or guardian is unable to support them because they are sick or disabled themselves, or they are in prison, or are not allowed to enter Great Britain
- they are living away from home because they are estranged from their parent or guardian or at risk of harm if they stay
- they have left local authority care and have to live away from home.

The rules for Income Support are quite complicated, so you should try to get further advice on this.

Carer's Allowance

Young people can claim Carer's Allowance from the age of 16 if they are looking after someone who gets the daily living component of Personal Independence Payments, or at least mid-rate care component of Disability Living Allowance, or Attendance Allowance. See our factsheet on Carer's Allowance for further information.

Universal Credit

This will replace means-tested benefits including Employment and Support Allowance and Income Support at some stage between now and 2023 and will change some of the rules. Young people of 16 or 17 will not always be able to get Universal Credit. See our factsheet on Universal Credit for more details.

Disabled Students' Allowances

These may be payable for anyone with additional disability-related costs of study, for example if you need specialist equipment or someone to help you. Disabled Student Allowances are not means-tested, but you would need to ask for a 'needs assessment' where you can explain what extra costs you might have. Look at the guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students->



[allowances-dsas](#) or call Student Finance England on 0800 100 0607 for advice on how to apply. Disability Rights UK also has some clear advice on other possibilities for support www.disabilityrightsuk.org/applying-disabled-students%E2%80%99-allowances-dsas

Charities and Trusts

There may be additional financial help available for disabled students. There is a very useful booklet that gives you more information about this at www.disabilityrightsuk.org/funding-charitable-trusts

Parents/guardians and appointees

Generally money for young people under 16 will be paid directly to their parent or guardian, but other people (a friend or other relative) can be made an appointee if that is necessary. An appointee is a person who has been asked to act for someone else who cannot manage their own affairs, for example dealing with money from benefits. This might be because they are too ill or disabled, or they might not have the mental capacity to manage by themselves.

Extra support on leaving care

If you have been living in care, your local authority is supposed to support you until you are 21 (and even longer if you are still in education or training). When you are 16 they will help you plan your future. When you are 18 you can leave care if you want to, and there must be a plan in place to support you.

You will be given a personal adviser who has to stay in touch with you, even after you have left care, so that you always have somewhere to live and enough money to live on. It is up to you to say how much support you want from a social worker or your personal adviser. You can ask for an advocate to



support you at any meetings to make sure everything is explained so that you understand it. They should help you claim whatever benefits you are entitled to.

You can complain if you are not happy with what happens at meetings or any arrangements that are made.

If you require further information or would like this factsheet in an alternative format you can contact us by calling: 01508 491210, by emailing: info@equallives.org.uk, or by writing to: Equal Lives, 15 Manor Farm Barns, Fox Road, Framingham Pigot, Norfolk, NR14 7PZ.

