

Happy Christmas
to you all



Link

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus/ASBAH

November/December 1988

Issue Number 119

30p

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)
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Registered Charity No. 249338

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ASBAH Publications

All available from National Office
 Cheques payable to "ASBAH"

Young People with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus — Learning and Development (1985) <i>Leonie Holgate</i>	£1.60	FACT SHEETSup to 10 copies free
The Handwriting of Spina Bifida Children (1979) <i>Joan Cambridge, E. M. Anderson</i>	£1.60	Translations of fact sheets are available into Bengali, Gujarati, Hindu, Punjabi and Urdu, and into Welsh.
Spina Bifida and You — A Guide for Young People (1985).....	£3.50	Please send at least 30p postage
Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida or Cerebral Palsy (1984).....	£1.75	VISUAL AIDS
Children with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus at School.....	£2.50	Slide sets and notes (12 slides) Living with Spina Bifida
Life & Death—thoughts on bereavement (1983).....	75p	£8.62 inc. VAT
Making our Way — individual experiences of young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus (1984).....	£1.20	Video — Training video on Hydrocephalus (May 1987). Contact Information dept. for details of hire or purchase.
BOOKLETS/LEAFLETS		MAGAZINES
General leaflet.....	5p	LIFT — for members of young ASBAH (LIFT).....Free
Housing: general advice for young people.....	Free	Causeway — for contributors to ASBAH's work.....Free
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All prices include post and packing		UK.....£3.30
		Europe and Overseas Surface Mail.....£4.80
		Air Mail.....£10.80
		All payments should be made in Sterling.
		*Except in the case of LINK all the above prices apply in the UK only. Overseas rates on request

Editor's Note

Are disabled people outside the law?

I have heard recently of two incidences where disabled people who clearly appear to have committed offences have not been prosecuted, or even investigated. Is this because of their disabilities?

One is a young man - himself disabled - who obtained money by fraudulent means by purporting to set up a holiday organisation for young people with disabilities. The other is someone else in a wheelchair who seems to have stolen cash from a couple of friends on two separate occasions. In neither case were the authorities at all concerned - preferring to leave both well alone.

Is this a common practice? Do the police and other official bodies in practice have one law for those who are able-bodied and another for those who are disabled?

How can disabled people ask for equal treatment if in instances like these they are outside the law?

We would be interested to hear from you with other examples and also perhaps examples of the opposite, where people have been inappropriately detained because their disability made it difficult to cater for them elsewhere.

Holiday plans

Full details of the LINK holiday to Florida next year are on pages 16/17

Problems...problems

You asked for it and here it is - a problem column. We do need your contributions for this. If we can't answer your questions, we will invite readers to send in their solutions based on personal experience.

See page 7.

Sue Gearing, Editor

On the INSIDE

NEWS

- 4 ASBAH news: Update on the move to Peterborough
- 5 Round-up news from local Associations
- 19 Newslines

MAIN FEATURES




- 8 Loving ourselves & Loving Others.....
Personal relationships by Pat Edser
- 20 Action speaks louder than words
LINK reports on action in East Devon

DAILY LIVING

- 7 NEW - Problem Share
- 7 Dial-a-Chemist
- 15 Eye on Equipment

LEISURE

- 16 LINK FLORIDA HOLIDAY 
- 18 Reading matter

FUNDRAISING

- 22 Appeals news

PLUS

- 23 Classified advertising
- 24 Directory of local Associations



Page 12Developing Skills Through Toys..ideas for Christmas gifts

FRONT COVER:

The night before Christmas - 12 year old Daniel Lawrence from Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex makes sure that everything is in place for Father Christmas - for the benefit of his younger sisters rather than for himself, no doubt! His father, David, whose photographs have appeared in LINK before, captured this special moment on his camera last Christmas

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Link

Is published by ASBAH (the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus).

Contributions to LINK by way of letters, news photographs, articles and opinions are warmly welcomed.

The closing date for the January issue is December 20. Send to the Editor, Mrs Sue Gearing, at London office.

Accommodation or an exchange for Swedish boy

My son Mattias, 16 years old, has spina bifida and uses a wheelchair. He is integrated in an ordinary school, studies English and would like to spend some time as a paying guest in England with a family that has accommodation suitable for him.

We live in central Stockholm in Sweden and are willing to receive an English youngster in exchange, if that would be desired. We have a modern flat and are living next to the tube station. The underground is equipped with elevators. My son travels totally on his own.

Mattias handles his daily life himself when the necessary equipment is installed such as a board on top of the bath for him to sit on for showers. He would need help with laundry and a few other chores, but he is bold and quite self-sufficient.

If anyone is willing to help us, please contact me.

The time that would suit Mattias best is middle of June, July and beginning of August next year (1989) for two or three weeks.

Renee Hoglin,
Gotgatan 118,
11662 Stockholm
Sweden.
Telephone 00967-8-726780 (eves or weekends).

Catherine's story

The story of the first four years of Christina written by her mother and published in the last two issues of LINK, has provoked a lot of interest and a number of letters from parents about their own experiences.

Mrs Norton from Dorset wrote and told us about Catherine and sent the photograph (above). Catherine now aged 2 is a happy little girl developing normally. But at the age of 6 months she was diagnosed as having hydrocephalus because of a cyst in her brain.

When Catherine was sent home after the operation "we were told that because of her age and not knowing what damage had been done, they didn't

think that she would ever crawl, walk or even speak. After the operation her left-hand side refused to work..." wrote her mother.

The family persevered with physiotherapy and also praying and laying-on of hands.

"Our prayers were answered on January 17 this year when our vicar's wife had Catherine at the back of the church. She took her first steps and by January 22 we couldn't stop her. From then on she has progressed so that much that in August she had her assessment done and is doing everything a normal two year old does.

"She still has difficulty in using her left hand now and again and is wearing special shoes as her left leg is weak. We have now been told that she can go to a playgroup with normal children and then into a normal school. We thank everyone for all their hard work and patience."

Mrs Norton,
Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset.



Catherine, aged 2

ASBAH's move to Peterborough

Since we last reported on the removal of ASBAH's Central Office to Peterborough there have been several developments.

Planning permission has been granted for the new building following the revisions which the architect made at our request. The builder has gone on site, and by the time that you read this, the building will have started. There is still a long way to go of course. Target date for completion is July/August 1989 but the winter-weather could have an affect on this.

It will soon be time for us to start marketing the present offices - re-

Letters

WHY ME?

by Sharon Griffiths, 15, a member of the Isle of Wight ASBAH.

*Backwards and forwards
from person to person
piggy in the middle - that's me.
No-one seems to care
using me as a figure.
always walking over me.
I'm a person.*

*I've got feelings too.
But you wouldn't know about that
would you?*

*So next time you see me in the street,
smile and wave.*

*I'm not the plague.
I'm not a disease that
you can catch.*

*Just because I'm disabled
doesn't mean we can't be friends.
Take me as I am
and let's be friends.*

Sharon says "I wrote this because I feel very strongly about the subject. Being picked on is no fun at all for anyone. I wrote this for all disabled people as we seem to get more than others."

member ASBAH members have first refusal!

A BOOST FOR PRESS & PR

We are pleased that Monica Hart, has left the Spastics Society where she was press officer and joined ASBAH to oversee our Public Relations and press contact. We are looking forward to enjoying a much higher public profile in the very near future.

Making their mark for Britain in the Paralympics

Although overshadowed by the main Olympic Games, the Paralympics which followed them in Seoul did get more publicity than in previous years, and deservedly so. As British Team Manager, Tony Sainsbury said "Our athletes work as hard as the able-bodied competitors. It takes an enormous amount of work and dedication".

Britain came third overall in the Games - a great achievement.

Among the competitors who had spina bifida are three known particularly well to ASBAH - Mark Tong of Morpeth in Northumberland, a member of the North East ASBAH, Ann Wild of South Woodford, London, a keen young sportswoman who in the past has been helped with the cost of equipment through a grant from the Professor Zachary Fund, and Jose Cichockyj, Editor of Athletic Challenge (mentioned in the last LINK). They all took part in basketball events.

There wasn't time for this issue to wait and hear how everyone got on and to hear personal experiences. But in the next issue we hope to cover it in more detail with some good photographs. Ann is a very proficient photographer so we are hoping she was busy with the camera when she wasn't competing!



Isle of Wight Island wedding

Above: Katrina Gregory in a beautiful pale peach dress at her wedding to Chris Farnbank at Newport Registry Office, Isle of Wight on a beautiful day in September. Katrina, 24, has grown up with the Isle of Wight ASBAH. She was one of the original members and the first to get married. A family reception was held at Chris's parents home in Sandown and a short honeymoon was spent on the island. Katrina and Chris are living in a flat in Ryde.

Sussex

Teddies unite and go parachuting!

BBC Director General, Michael Checkland and his wife, Sue were judges at the local Association's Grand Teddy Bear Rally at Rusper.

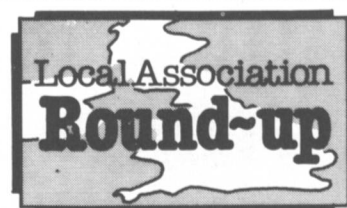
About 200 teddy bears persuaded their owners to take them to the rally. They were all shapes and sizes, dressed in a variety of outfits - including those who had dressed to go parachuting.

Fifty bears 'chose' to make 120 ft parachute jumps. They were parachuted from a line attached to a high

flying kite guided by a member of the Brighton Kite Fliers.

There were competitions to suit all bears - The most obviously loved bear (well worn!); The bear I'd most like to take home with me; The best dressed bear; The bear with the most appealing expression; The bear most suitably equipped for parachuting.

The rally raised more than £637 for Sussex ASBAH and it seems that the teddies really had a day to remember.



Derbyshire Guiding star

Perseverance was rewarded for 11 year old Claire Quinlan of Ticknall, Derbyshire. Recently there were great celebrations at home and in her Melbourne guide pack when she was awarded the rare Star of Merit, an award for guides who show courage in adversity. Claire, who has spina bifida, has been through quite a bit after 20 operations and there is still the prospect of more to come. As for Claire it seems to have been a big surprise "I honestly wasn't expecting anything like this at all - it's wonderful" she commented.

Dudley and Wolverhampton Going to great lengths

Committee member, Jane Oakley made quite a splash for the local ASBAH when she completed a 50 length swim to raise money for a summer holiday abroad for Association members.

Jane, 23, who has spina bifida, completed her swim at a local pool taking just over an hour to swim 1,250 metres and raised £331.

"I find swimming is keeping me fit and I now go to the local swimming baths every week and average 30 lengths" she said.

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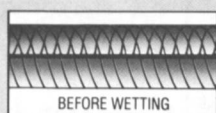
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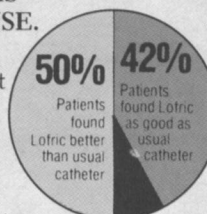
LoFric is self lubricated by simply wetting the catheter for 30 seconds using water. The surface of the catheter absorbs water which forms an efficient protective layer between the catheter and the urethra.

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POSITION:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE: TEL:

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The Specialists in Individual Healthcare
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Can you imagine mobile chemists acting as a personal delivery service with both nursing skills and large stocks? Sounds perfect doesn't it?

For all of us who use incontinence aids for which we require a prescription this system sounds ideal. No having to rush to the doctors at the last minute to pick up the prescription; then to the chemists with a fervent hope of a quick supply, only to find you have to wait two days for the stocks.

An emergency call to Liz and Nigel Box of Healthlink will mean a delivery within 24 hrs*. For the normal supply their records' system enables them to be ready with your regular needs at the time you need it. They personally deliver regularly and will post items only at busy times and if outside the area. The personal service allows each party to get to know each other and thereby each other's needs.

Healthlink currently operates in the South East and stretches into parts of Hants and Surrey. It also operates south of the Thames in London.

For those outside the region it offers a postal service. As it is like a chemist it receives its money from the same source. This means that you still need a prescription, but in times of emergency, this can be sorted out after you have received your goods, i.e. no waiting for the prescription first.

Healthlink carries large stocks in order to perform this service and this gives clients a chance to experiment with different continence systems.

If you wish to contact Liz or Nigel Box to arrange an appointment with them either write or telephone to :-

Healthlink,
2 Windlesham Road,
Shoreham By Sea,
West Sussex, BN4 5AE.
Tel: 0273 45587

Ian Laker
ASBAH Disabled Living Advisor

*Healthlink supplies stoma appliances, sheaths, leg and night bags, catheters, etc. but not pads

?roblem share

*The new LINK column where you can air your problems. If ASBAH can't find the solution, maybe other readers can. It's YOUR column - you requested it - so please do write in and share your problem. * For problems relating to personal care and hygiene please contact the Disabled Living Advisory Department.*

? My sister is severely disabled by spina bifida and has been cared for all her life by her mother. Unfortunately, mother is herself recovering from a major operation and can no longer lift my sister or do any of the other heavy caring duties. She insists that my sister must be looked after at home and the statutory authorities are providing some help. This will still be insufficient for the 24 hour care needed. Are there any other sources of help?

A The new Independent Living Fund which is being administered by DIG (Disability Income Group) should be able to help. It sounds as if your sister would meet the criteria, and the Fund is specifically aimed at providing money which will enable people to remain at home rather than go into residential care, to help those who wish to leave residential care and live in the community - but who may need some 'topping up' with other resources. Please contact ASBAH's Fieldwork Department if you want to know more.

? Because of my disability I have a really embarrassing problem - I can't turn round sufficiently to wipe my bottom. I know it's something that should be done properly - can you help?

A One of the fieldworkers has suggested sticking a mirror or mirror tile on the underside of the loo seat. You might be able to turn round sufficiently to look into this and you should get a better view! *

? I have been told that I smell although I can't smell anything. Is it possible that I do, and if so, what can I do about it?

A It's usually sweat that causes us to smell or if you are incontinent your urine or faeces. Make sure you have a shower or bath once a day and keep the whole body - especially the genital area clean. We all smell because we all produce sweat. When we don't wash it away we then have 'BO' and the longer you leave it the worse it becomes. If you are incontinent your personal hygiene needs to be all the more thorough. If you have an 'accident' and don't clean yourself and your clothes thoroughly the unpleasant odour will linger. Your urine can often smell if you do not drink frequently because this makes the urine much more concentrated and powerful. The cleanliness of your clothes is important, too. Try and change the clothes that are close to your skin once a day.

Anti-perspirants and deodorants are there to put on when you are clean, not to try and cover up a smell!. Ask yourself - are you nice to be near? *

? My daughter aged 13 has spina bifida and hydrocephalus. She has had a triple arthrodesis operation to set both feet. The operation will be done on both feet, separately one year after the other. She has some mobility problems - both feet turn inwards and she walks very awkwardly. She has no feeling at all in her feet and I have been told that if she doesn't have the operations she will be unable to walk at all in a few years time. Is there any other family out there who has been through a similar experience. I'd love to get in touch. Can you help?

A We have no answer as we have been unable to trace a family with a similar experience. Can any reader help?

Loving ourselves and loving others

-the importance of forming good relationships

by Pat Edser, a fieldworker with ASBAH and also a trained counsellor

The paper on 'personal and sexual relationships' given at the Association's conference this year by Mrs Pat Edser, one of ASBAH's fieldworkers, provoked such interest that LINK is delighted to reproduce it here in full.

Relationships in all their many and varied forms are an intrinsic part of our lives and most people would agree that in general human beings thrive on social contact.

Isolation can be self-destructive. Certainly for those with disabilities, lack of social contact can reduce the quality of a life already restricted by physical limitations. Making and understanding relationships, therefore, are matters of considerable importance to us all.

ASBAH has in recent years become very aware that many teenagers and young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus are having problems making personal and sexual relationships. Why is this happening? What can we do to help, and how can we ensure that future generations are emotionally and sexually better prepared for adult life?

Naivety

Firstly, I would like to illustrate through my own experience some of the problems faced by our young people. My first introduction to this was a couple of years ago when I led a discussion group on this subject as part of a one day workshop on independent living. I remember being quite shocked at the lack of basic sexual facts and the sheer naivety of the group, some of whom were married. Many admitted that that had been their first opportunity to discuss sex or to share their feelings about sexuality.

I soon became aware of the difficulties some young people were having and was determined to look further to my own group in Kent. I have about 120 people in the 16 plus group 'on my patch' and have since spent considerable time with them discussing relationships and every aspect of their disability. It became evident that the majority had a very low opinion of themselves and I could count on one hand those who have had a satisfying relationship.

I know one young man who has been in prison because of his sexual offences. One of the many reasons for this is that nobody dealt with his sexual problems as a teenager, nor did he have the opportunity of talking about his



sexuality in relation to his disability. I suspect that this will not be the only case of its kind with which we will have to deal.

So why is this happening? Why is there such a low level of self-esteem in our young people?

To understand this we need to look at the fundamental emotion of love. From the very beginning a growing child needs and learns to feel recognised, appreciated and wanted. This, in turn, leads to a capacity to give and receive love. The absence of the feeling of being lovable is, I feel, at the root of their future problems relating to sexuality.

Liking ourselves

Love of self is of the utmost importance. Without it a relationship with one's family, friends and people around cannot be formed. The way we love ourselves determines how we love others.

Love of self is one of the most difficult things for people with disabilities to develop. They often judge themselves

Continued on next page

Loving ourselves and loving others...2

by what they see in the mirror, e.g. boots, calipers, sticks and wheelchairs, or even worse, by the negatives they may hear. Some hear all the wrong messages and end up feeling very different, unattractive, inadequate, inferior and a nuisance to all around them. It is, therefore, all too easy for a teenager to develop a very low opinion of himself and, more significantly, feel unlovable.

How we think about ourselves is reflected in the way we behave with other people. If we like ourselves the feedback is one of approval and satisfaction. If we do not like ourselves it is one of dislike and disappointment. The person with disabilities frequently finds it difficult to like himself. The more obvious his disability, the more difficult it is for him to approve of himself. He has to learn to separate his physical appearance from his self-image. Recognising his strengths and attributes as a person is essential.

Hospitalisation and frequent medical examinations seem to be an integral part of life for children and young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus. They grow up used to being undressed, peered at and many different people carrying out very personal and intimate tasks.

Unfortunately, lack of respect for a young person's privacy and dignity does nothing to help that person feel worthy. Instead it encourages him to think of himself as an object that nobody respects. I clearly remember going with another professional worker to visit a family I had never been to before. Whilst we were there the girl's urine bag leaked; before we could say or do anything the mother had stripped her 17 year old daughter nearly naked in front of us. I wondered what went through the girl's mind at the time. I tried to imagine what my 17 year old able-bodied daughter might have felt. It didn't bear thinking about. It seems we have a different set of values for people who have disabilities - with disastrous results.

Emotional doubts

Another difficulty for some teenagers who are disabled is dependence on parents. A young person who relies on a parent for personal care and decision-making finds it difficult to develop emotionally. Because these emotional ties with the parent are not broken the young person often remains immature. Parents, too, are faced with many problems. They are pressurised by statutory bodies and society to take full responsibility for caring for their child. They are not reassured or told that it is okay to say that they are unable to cope, or that it is alright to want to share the caring. Parents are not encouraged to bring up independent children. Basically they are left to struggle on alone.

Adolescence is a difficult time for all teenagers regardless of disability. We all have emotional doubts. We feel insecure and worry that we will never find a partner. Relationships and sexual problems are experienced by most people at some time. These problems cannot be blamed on disability.

When discussing sex the influence of peers on the average teenager is very strong. What is not taught at home or

in school is picked up from friends. This rarely happens with the teenager who is disabled, and this again places more responsibility on the parents. If the subject of sex and sexuality is avoided at home he will learn nothing. I often wonder if a disabled teenager watching male/female interaction at the cinema or on TV can relate to himself. I doubt it. Often nobody has ever told him that he, too, is a sexual human being.

It would be all too easy to place the blame for these problems on the parents, as is so often done. I sincerely believe that to be wrong. Professionals working with our young people continue to make many mistakes both in their attitude to disability and their lack of support to parents.

Families are often helped with the practical problems of caring for someone who has disabilities, but rarely are they helped to cope with their feelings of guilt, anger, frustration or resentment.

Sexual hang-ups

Of still greater significance - they get no help in coping with their child's emerging sexuality which I know causes much heartache.

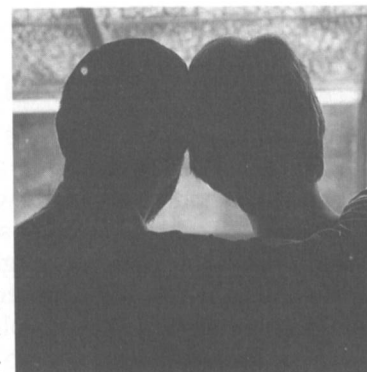
Many professionals have strong feelings about sexuality and those who have disabilities. Often those working with people who are disabled bring with them their own sexual hang-ups which prevent them from giving appropriate advice and support to either parents or young people. I speak from experience. I was educated at a convent from the age of four years - an excellent education, but I can tell you by the time I left at 16, I had one or two hang-ups about sex. I was fortunate enough finally to get rid of those hang-ups through my training as a counsellor. If I hadn't, I would consider myself totally unqualified and unable to deal with other people's sexual problems.

For most people, sex and sexuality is a very difficult subject to deal with openly. This is why, in my opinion, many professionals, understandably, take the easy way out and ignore the subject, which, of course, means that they are denying their sexuality and this is unforgivable.

So what can we do as an association, as parents and professionals to help these young people now?

In an ideal world, and if ASBAH's resources were unlimited (which, of course, they are not), I would like to see ASBAH's present counselling service expanded in order that individual or group counselling can be offered to more people, enabling them to share their anxieties and doubts about their self-worth and sexuality. Counselling often works, but it takes time. For example, some while ago I became involved with a young person in his twenties, living alone, and unemployed. He had never had a

continued on next page



Loving ourselves and loving others...3

relationship. He felt worthless and saw no reason for living. I spent many hours over several months discussing his childhood, relationship with his parents, his feelings of resentment towards his siblings, his problems at school, his disability etc. Through counselling he gained enough insight to understand that he was a worthwhile person. He accepted other people's feelings. He realised that he still had a long way to go but he had lost the chip on his shoulder. I am pleased to say that he has had a girl friend and I feel very optimistic about his future.

Some of our young people still need basic sex education which can, of course, be tackled in the home and should be tackled in schools and colleges.

How do we ensure that future generations are better prepared emotionally for adult life?

★ We must do our best to encourage and teach parents how to make their children independent. I appreciate how hard this can be and how long it takes to teach new skills, but I firmly believe that independence is vital to a child's emotional development.

★ We must respect a child's privacy and dignity. A child must grow up to respect his own body. Parents should be prepared to emphasise the importance of this to professionals dealing with their child.

★ Do not deny the young person his sexuality. The role of sexuality in the development of personality has long been recognised. Sexuality is not just the sex act. It encompasses all that is loving and sensuous, and affects a person's self-confidence.

★ When a person who is disabled has enough confidence in his own lovableness and his ability to love, then he will be well equipped for life. If this confidence is not there because his sexuality has been denied by others he will believe that he is incapable of functioning sexually.

★ We need to look at the present provision of sex education in schools, which I feel is, in general, sadly lacking. Having said that, there is very little written material available on the subject for teachers to use. How are they expected to know or understand the particular physical and emotional problems relating to so many different disabilities? I suppose in the end it comes back to us. Maybe we as an association should try

to promote more interest in the subject, produce more literature, including an information pack for teachers/carers on sex education. Again we are talking about time and money.

★ The effort needed if we are to help is, of course, two-fold. Attitudes must change. The

general public must be educated on how they can make the disabled feel more at ease, more wanted and worthwhile. They must also learn that disabled young people have the same sexual feelings as us all.

★ Likewise our young people must change. They must learn to take risks and involve themselves in society. They must learn to take responsibility for their personal care and decision-making. If they sit at home being withdrawn and melancholy, it is difficult to believe that they are sexual human beings.

Obviously I have had to generalise in this article. Not all our young people have these problems. But those who do, need our help now.

We can no longer sweep this subject under the carpet. Our young people have the right to enjoy the same social, emotional and sexual contact as the able-bodied. The responsibility for ensuring that they do, lies with us all!

Reference: Sex, Love and the Physically Handicapped. Evelyn West Ayrault. Continuum. New York.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Following Pat's talk and discussion at the conference, there is clearly a determination by people involved in ASBAH to be of greater help to those young people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus who are having difficulties in forming relationships and coming to terms with their sexuality. As a result, ASBAH has decided to extend the fieldworkers' training programme to include training in counselling. Some of them, like Pat, are already trained counsellors, but not all. ASBAH feels that this would be an important progression in our services to young people.

ASBAH also hopes to provide the opportunity at its Study Days for young people, parents and professionals to discuss openly the subject of relationships and sexuality.



Taking a chance on life

Life for disabled people in this country is a lottery says a recent report from the Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability.

The report entitled 'Living Options Lottery' looks at the housing and support services for people with severe physical disabilities 1986/88. It draws on evidence from more than 200 severely disabled people in England and Wales as well as from service providers.

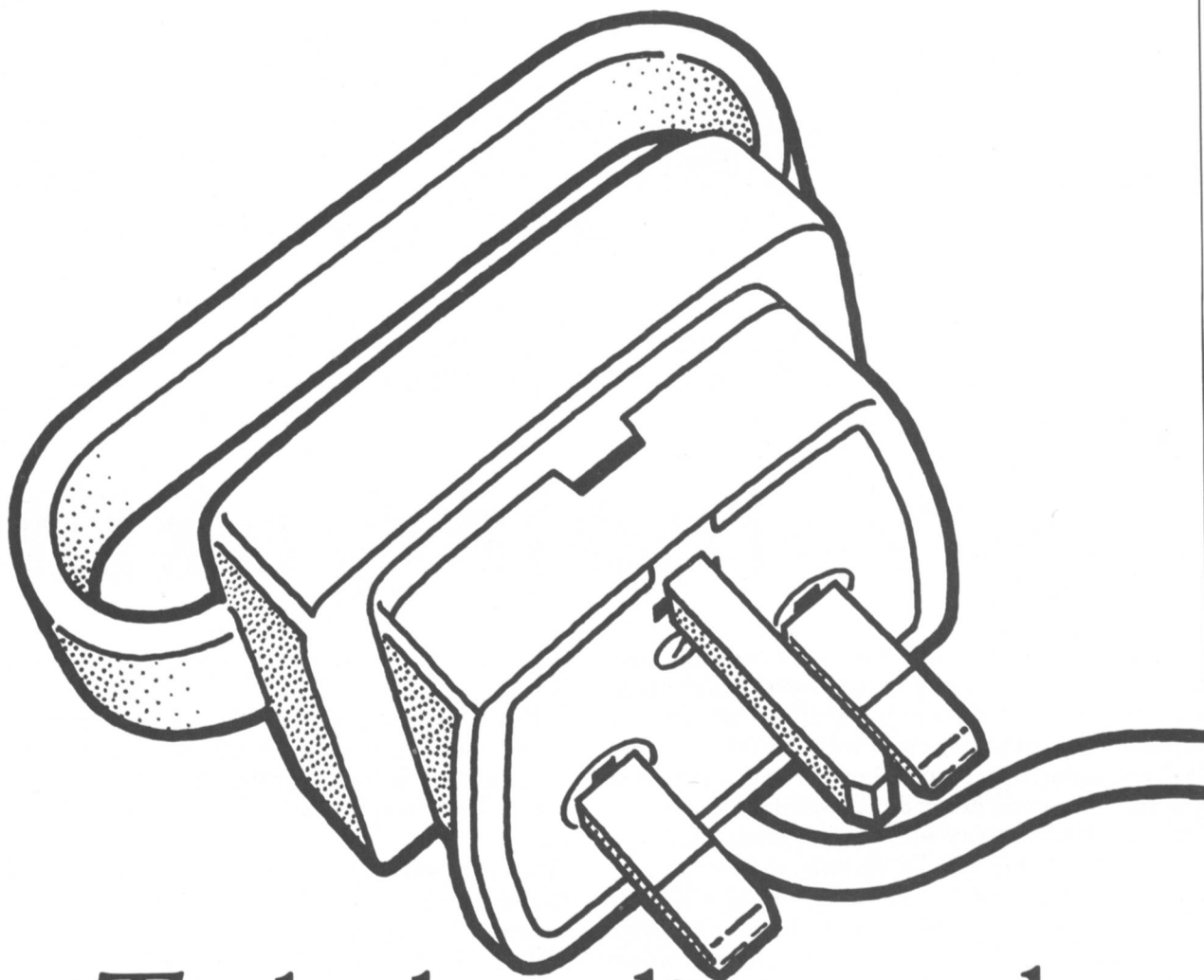
The main findings of the report are:

● Even the most severely physically disabled person can, with the right help, be responsible for his or her own life

● But housing and personal support services are a lottery. Chance, not need, determines the amount and kind of help received.

● As a result, few people obtain the flexible, dependable services they need to live on their own. Most live restricted lives in inappropriate institutional settings, or dependent on family or friends

A copy of the report can be obtained price £6 including p. & p. from the Prince of Wales' Advisory Group on Disability, 8 Bedford Row, WC1R 4BA. Cash with order.



To the handicapped it's a world of difference.

Simple-to-use electric appliances and controls can help disabled people enjoy easier, more independent lives.

The plug adaptor shown above, for example, enables arthritic hands to secure a grip more readily.

We can advise you on this and other aids for the disabled and the elderly, such as modified cooker controls, time switches for electric blankets and lights, and switches that can be operated by a walking stick or an elbow.

For the severely handicapped, electricity also contributes to a range of equipment

controlled by minimal movement, including air switches, operated by a light touch of finger or toe.

There are fuller details in our free "Making Life Easier for the Disabled" booklet.

Just send the coupon to Pat McNally and she'll be pleased to send you a copy.



To: Pat McNally, Electricity Publications, PO Box 2, Feltham, Middlesex. TW14 0TG.

Please send me your "Making Life Easier for the Disabled" booklet.

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____



Mary Barton, one of ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisors, based at Five Oaks, gives some useful pointers to toys that you could buy at Christmas for a child with hydrocephalus that will have special play value...

Developing skills.

Christmas approaches and the time for choosing toys and games for the children is in full flight! Let us pause to think and see what could be bought that will not only give pleasure to the young child with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, but could be beneficial and constructive to certain aspects of his or her development.

There are aspects of play with toys or games which can be used positively for specific learning; to develop concentration, to emphasise sequencing (putting events, or thought processes in step by step logical order), memory training perception (size and shape), manipulation (the use of hand and fingers), and co-ordination (especially the use of eyes with finger movements). Some of these are the specific learning difficulties that have now been highlighted as problems associated with hydrocephalus.

There are many good pre-school type toys and games on the market which cover the development of such skills and could help in the early training of young children with such problems.

A very useful annual publication, issued each autumn, gives up-to-date news on toys and games - 'What Toy' - which is available in the magazine section of many newsagents. This contains details of many toys which have been tested by children and parents and observed by varying professional people including nursery nurses, teachers, therapists, psychologists, together with mem-

bers of the Play Matters/National Toy Library Advisory Panel.

This is an article to highlight some types of toys and games which could be most relevant to helping children with the specific learning difficulties already mentioned and to encourage the learning skills of the pre-school child.

It must be stressed that to gain the maximum play and learning value from these toys and games, adult supervision and guidance, together with re-inforced relevant talking while playing, will help the child with concentration and meaningful play.

All areas of play and development overlap, especially with a young developing child, where movement, hearing, seeing and thinking are all closely linked and vitally dependent on each other. Bearing this in mind, although the following toys and games have been grouped for specific learning skills, there will be other benefits:

☐ *Play material to aid development of perception and manipulative skills*

Mobiles: to encourage eye focus and movement, leading to reaching out of arms

Activity centres: to encourage eye focus and reaching out





through toys

- hand/eye co-ordination, as well as a reward toy - action/result.

Marble run: encouraging eye movements for 'tracking' (side to side) first of all, and then in later development, as a manipulative toy.

Pop up pets: progressing to hammer balls, Escor toys.

Posting boxes: recognition and matching of shapes. Hand and finger control to post shapes.

Picture dominoes and lottos: matching of shapes, hand/finger and direction activity. Learning to take 'turns'. When used with relevant words, improving vocabulary and comprehension.

Finger paint, and paints: encouraging hand and finger play.

Play Doh, modelling materials: movements to develop the feeling of different textures.

Building and construction kits: excellent for hand and finger training as well as for learning the position of objects in space, and turning 2D pictures into 3D objects.

Other toys include:

Lego, Stickle Bricks, Activity and Building Centre Duplo, Popoids, Geo Block Packs (NES - see end for address)

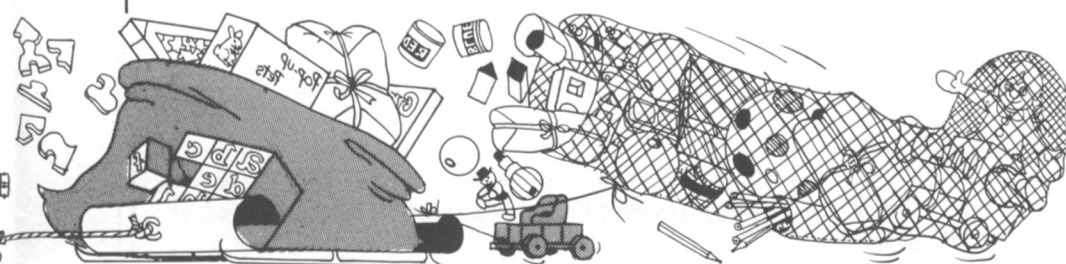
More complicated perception material for developing recognition of shape and directional patterns, as well as more intricate finger movements includes:

Solitaire, mosaics, peg boards, Lights up, Chinese Checkers, Hexa Colour, Mighty Mind, 'magic' sketches, Tap Tap, picture templates, stencil sets.

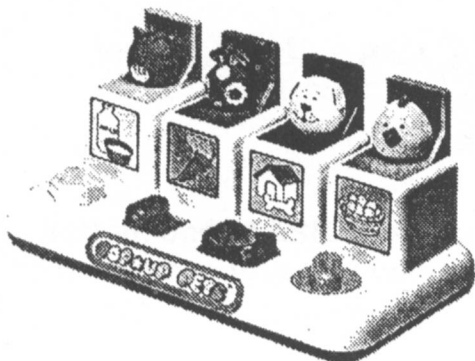
☐ *Play material to help thought processes, sequencing, logic, memory, pre-reading, writing and number work:*

Some of these may be considered very 'educational' toys and games, but they are worth considering in order to give a child or young person with specific learning difficulties increased help, when used with adult supervision and guidance.

Three suppliers are listed on the next page:



Pop Up Pets



Popoids Playmates



Write Start

Developing skills through toys *continued*

Early Learning Centre:

Write Start and Learning to Write, Letter Stencils & Picture Word Cards, Learn to Spell and Spellbound, Number Snap.

Learning Development Aids (LDA):

Match & Make numbers, Social Sequences, Time & Growth Sequence (aspects of time), Sequential Thinking Cards.

Nottingham Educational Supplies (NES):

Sound Lottos, Write & Wipe Proficiency Prog., Listening Lottos.

Write for catalogues which are full of lots of other ideas to:

ELA, South Marston, Swindon SN3 4TJ. Or ring for name of nearest shop: Tel: 0793 831300.

LDA, Duke Street, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 2AE.

NES, 17, Ludlow Hill Road, Melton, West Bridgeford, Nottingham NG2 6HD

Another useful address is:

Play Matters/Nat. Toy Libraries Assn, 68 Churchway, London NW1 1LT

Courses

Castle Priory College, in Wallingford, Oxfordshire, run by the Spastics Society has a number of residential courses coming up in the near future that may be of interest to LINK readers:

January 6-8 Clumsiness in Children

for any staff from ordinary or special schools for children with learning or behaviour difficulties. 24/146

January 16-20 Communication through Music

a basic workshop for non-musicians who work with young and adult groups having special needs. 24/150

The cost of the courses varies and is from £69 for tuition plus a fee for residence from £49 and for non-residence from £20.

Details Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0HE. Tel: 0491 37551.

The Physically Disabled young Adult: Health and Social Needs

February 3.

Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1.

A one day conference which will include as speakers, Dr Martin Bax and Dr Andrew Thomas (known to many members of ASBAH for their research work for the association).

Details and fee from Steve Bates, ICAN, 198 City Road, London EC1V 2PH. Tel: 01 608 2462

EYE ON EQUIPMENT

Used wheelchair service

A new company has been set up to provide good secondhand wheelchairs at reasonable prices.

GBL Services is run by three young men with spina bifida - two of whom are Disabled Living Advisors for ASBAH - Ian Laker and Jamie Gilham. GBL is acting as a clearance centre for used chairs and will keep a record of all those who want to buy or sell.

"We will match buyer and seller, pick up and deliver, service and repair where necessary - thereby, hopefully, giving each person what they want at the price they want."

"As we keep stocks ourselves, should the chair prove unsuitable we will take it into our stocks. We will not be doing this free of charge, but rather than charge each customer, we will hope to make our money by buying at a fair



At Naidex, ASBAH's Disabled Living Advisors spotted a chair with a difference..it comes apart (as above) and is easy to put together again.

Called **The Fenolyte**, it could be an alternative to the normal folding chair. It's made of 90% plastic, is comfortable and lightweight, and is in the inexpensive price range - £345 for the attendant pushed model and £385 self-propelled. Details from Lieuse Technology Ltd., 6 Hornton Place, London W8 4LZ. Tel: 01 938 1762.

More news from Naidex in the next issue of LINK.

price, doing the work and then selling at a price in proportion to the work done on it" said Ian.

"As users ourselves we will be able to help each client by advising them which chair would best suit their needs. By keeping our own stock of chairs we will be able to offer trials and instant sales, as well as hiring facilities for emergencies".

GBL also offer repairs, alteration and servicing to existing chairs of any make.

GBL Services is at 100 Midsummer Avenue, Hounslow, Middlesex, TW4 5BB

Tel: (Steve Brown) 01 577 3324; (Jamie Gilham) 01 742 1620; (Ian Laker) 01 569 4195

The simple way to put you in touch with the largest range of Ostomy & Incontinence Supplies

As one of the longest established companies to specialise in the supply of Ostomy and Incontinence appliances we are pleased to offer probably the largest range of products all under one roof.

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Proprietor: Maureen A. Nuttall. SRN RSCN QN





LINK READERS' HOLIDAY - AUTUMN 1989

16 days in FLORIDA

Orlando (10 nights), St Petersburg Beach (4 nights)

Enjoy all the attractions of Disneyworld, Epcot, Seaworld etc. plus the fabulous beach on the Gulf of Mexico. Flights by British Airways 'Poundstretcher'

DEPARTURES FROM MANCHESTER OR GATWICK.

September 28 - October 13 October 12 - October 27

AFTER the success of the first LINK readers' holiday in 1987 to Florida, the Sunderland Travel Agents Panovista are organising a similar holiday for Autumn, 1989.

They have come up with a wonderful two centre package - ten nights in Orlando staying at a different hotel than last time, with days in Disneyworld and Epcot and visits to other places of interest, followed by four nights at St Petersburg Beach on the glorious Gulf of Mexico for relaxing and sunbathing. Please note that for the 1989 holiday ASBAH will NOT be sending a member of staff.

ORLANDO...New Radisson Inn and Aquatic Centre.

Described as a complete hotel, aquatic and fitness complex it is located on International drive with its array of restaurants and just across the street from Mercado, an attractive international shopping and eating out village. There are rooms especially equipped for people with disabilities. Each has the usual good facilities expected of American hotels, including a bathroom with shower and wc. The hotel has an indoor Olympic size swimming pool and a complete health club. Also in the 15 acre complex are tropical gardens an outdoor pool, snack and health bar tennis court and jogging track.

ST PETERSBURG...The Breckenridge Resort Hotel.

Located on the crystal white beach. The hotel has a heated outdoor pool with a poolside bar where there's entertainment most days. In the evenings there is dancing and light entertainment in the hotel's Peacock lounge.

All 200 guest rooms have a kitchenette with grill, fridge china, cutlery, and cooking utensils and table and chairs if you prefer to dine in your own room. They have of course a private bath with shower and wc. (Bathroom doors measure 23" wide.)

COST OF HOLIDAY*

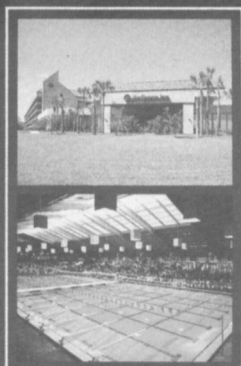
Adult (sharing twin bedded room).....	£749
Child (under 12, sharing room with min. 2 adults).....	£504
<i>There are also special rates and deductions for 3rd, 4th or 5th person in a room</i>	
Single room supplement.....	£204
USA airport & customs tax.....	£9
Insurance per person	£29
Premier super seats on flights.....	£220
Deposit per person.....	£50
<i>*costs are based on value of US dollar at \$1.80 to the £</i>	

The cost of the holiday includes:

- Flight by Jumbo 747 British Airway. Assistance will be available for boarding and unboarding disabled members
- Coach transfers to hotels, airports and all attractions
- Accommodation for 14 nights
- 4 day passport to Disneyworld and Epcot with unlimited use of all attractions and transport system
- 2 day coach excursions - NASA Space Centre, Cypress Gardens
- 6 hour visit to Busch Gardens
- 1 day excursion to Sea World
- Services of the Panovista Travel representatives throughout the holiday

Orlando

FLORIDA
Walt Disney World Area



All 200 guest rooms are uniquely designed with your comfort in mind.

Each room includes a modern kitchenette with separate dining area.



Radisson Inn
& Justus Aquatic Center

continued on next page



FLORIDA HOLIDAY *continued*

The importance of independence

Each group will be about 40 people strong, made up of families with perhaps one of their number with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, as well as young adults who are disabled going on on their own or with a friend.

We must stress that you need to be independent and able to cope with your own personal care routines, and organise yourself to get to the coach etc. on time. ASBAH will not this year be sending someone with nursing experience to help out with special tasks so you must be able to cope on your own or have someone with you who can help if necessary.

While hotels are generally accessible, bathrooms/loos tend to be quite small and wheelchair access may be restricted. You need to be able to get on and off the loo and in and out of the bath on your own.

Generally, accessibility to restaurants, cinemas and attractions in the States is excellent and should present no problem. The Americans are very welcoming and hospitable to everyone. The main point to stress is that the ten days in Orlando are pretty hectic and long. You need to have plenty of stamina. As there will not be someone available to push you, be prepared to wheel yourself over long distances in hot weather unless you bring your own pusher/helper.

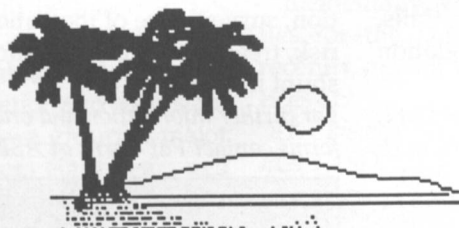
Lifting

It won't be possible because of the cost and size of our groups to have accessible coaches etc. while in the States. But assistance will be available to manually lift disabled group members on and off ordinary coaches. Panovista provide two very co-operative and strong men and it worked well before. Canvas portable carrying seats make the lifting easier. It would help if you brought your own (cost £31) - details will be supplied if you book.

For more details of the holiday and a booking form write now to:

Panovista Travel,
78 Sea Road,
Fulwell, Sunderland,
Tyne & Wear.
Or telephone them on 091 5494444.

Don't delay. We anticipate quite a demand.



"Help for customers with special needs — from British Gas"

At British Gas, we believe in looking after our customers — particularly those in special need of help.

We have many helpful services available to elderly or disabled customers, or those with other special needs. We also support and recommend the services of Neighbourhood Energy Action, which provides insulation and draught-proofing for low income households in the UK.

If you'd like to know more about any of our special services, tick your area(s) of special interest in the coupon below and send it to:

British Gas, FREEPOST TK901, Brentford, Middx, TW8 8BR.

Please send me more details about:

- Gas Safety ☐
- Advice for senior citizens ☐
- Advice for disabled people ☐
- Energy saving tips ☐
- Practical help with energy saving from your local NEA project ☐
- Information for the caring professions about British Gas services for those in need ☐

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address:

..... Postcode

British Gas

Reading Matter

Meeting the Personal Care Needs of Physically Disabled Students College

Published by Skill: The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities.

This is a new information booklet for young people, adults and their advisors about the options available for physically disabled students who require help with meeting their personal care needs when at college.

Price £1.50 from Skill: the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities (formerly the National Bureau for Handicapped Students), 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA. Tel: 01 274 0565

Help for physically disabled people

Published by West Birmingham Health Authority.

Full of useful information on services and benefits, the guide has been published in response to a recent survey in the West Birmingham area in which 90% of disabled people interviewed complained of difficulties in obtaining details of facilities at their disposal.

It contains chapters on local council and health authority services, money matters, tips on getting out and about, as well as a list of organisations and voluntary bodies that could prove useful.

It has been freely distributed to residents with a physical disability in W. Birmingham, but can be purchased by other people at £1.50 per copy, including postage.

Obtainable from Steve Arnold, Carnegie Centre, Hunters Road, Hockley, Birmingham B19 1DR. Tel: 021 554 3899.

COPE

Published by Wiltshire Careers Service.

The second edition of COPE (compendium of post 16 education and training in residential establishments

for handicapped young people) is now available.

COPE provides detailed information on residential establishments offering further education and/or training to young people with handicaps or special needs.

A full page of information is provided for the great majority of establishments, including a general description of each college or centre, its stated aims, categories of handicaps accepted, details of courses etc., intake dates, waiting lists and fees, method of application and selection, staffing and care provision, links with local FE colleges and the community.

Price £6.85 per copy inc. p & p. Orders to Wiltshire Careers Service, Support Services Unit, Room 341, County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JB. Payment must be included for single copies. Cheques payable to 'Wiltshire County Council'.

Handbook for Hospital Patients

Published by Disability Alliance

The benefit system for hospital patients, their families and advisors, comes under the spotlight in this guide.

It has been written by an experienced hospital welfare rights worker and answers questions on how patients can claim benefits while in hospital. It acts as a reference book for advisors.

Price £3.30 (non-claimants), £1.80 (Claimants) including p & p from the Disability Alliance ERA, 25 Denmark Street, London WC2 8NJ.

A Guide to Countryside Recreation for Disabled People

Published by the Country Landowners Association Charitable Trust

This guide lists a wide range of countryside leisure facilities throughout England and Wales which are accessible. No less than eight new locations in Hertfordshire are featured, for example, including lakes, country parks, picnic areas and nature trails. Some sites offering accommodation are included.

Price £1.45 from the Publications Dept, The County Landowners Association, 16 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PQ.

Wheelchairs

Published by Oxfordshire Health Authority

This is the sixth edition and incorporates many improvements in wheelchair design and essential details necessary in choosing a wheelchair suitable for one's needs. It is fully illustrated throughout.

Price £4.50 plus £1 p & p. Available from Equipment for the Disabled (Dept 477), Mary Marlborough Lodge, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LD.

Directory for Disabled People (5th Edition)

Published by Woodhead-Faulkner Ltd.

Edited by Ann Darnbrough and Derek Kinrade.

This has established itself as the leading handbook for people with disabilities on the facilities and support available.

The new 5th edition has been completely updated and expanded. It now includes a major chapter on access, and information on crucial changes in social legislation.

The book covers every area of daily life, perhaps the most important being that of finance. It is written both as a reference work and a personal handbook and is excellent value for money.

Available through leading booksellers at £14.95 or from Woodhead-Faulkner Ltd, c/o International Book Distributors, 66 Wood Lane End, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 4RG, price £16.95 to include p. & p.

Hydrocephalus Shunt Infections

By Dr Roger Bayston

Published by Chapman and Hall Medical

An informative book, with a forward by Mr D M Forrest FRCS (past Chairman of ASBAH's Medical Advisory Committee) which contains chapters on shunt colonisation, the diagnosis of shunt infection, surveillance of the patient at risk, treatment and prevention of shunt infections.

For further information and order forms contact Pat Corns at ASBAH

● Now there's the chance to learn the practical skills of drawing, painting and photography in your own home.

Britain's newest and most unusual education institution, the Open College of Arts, has just gone national, and is hoping to enrol 10,000 home students of all ages and occupations by Christmas.

Students will have self-study course books prepared by the OCA and the support of expert tutors in local colleges, polytechnics and schools.

In the last year, over 1,200 OCA students have been learning this way in seven pilot areas. These include people who wish to learn at home because of their own disability.

In the coming year students will be able to take a Foundation Course in Art and Design which introduces them to drawing, painting, sculpture, textiles and graphics; a more specialist course in painting; and a course in the art of photography in conjunction with a BBC TV series starting in January.

For details write to Open College of Arts, 18 Victoria Park Square, London E2 9PF

● The drive to improve employment prospects for disabled people has been given a boost by the appointment of Alan Clarke, from Barclays Bank, as East Midlands Regional Director of Opportunities for the Disabled.

On secondment from the bank as part of its Community Enterprise Programme, Alan will be based in Leicester. Opportunities for the Disabled is a voluntary organisation and was established by a group of major employers eight years ago to help disabled job seekers receive a fair chance in the

Newsline NEWSLINES Newsline



Just some of the ingenious gadgets now available in a new mail order catalogue to make life easier for less able people. The range goes from bottle openers to bath seats, from walking sticks to wheelchairs.

The mail order service has been launched by a new company, Keep Able, based in Wellingborough, Northants. Their 64 page full colour fully illustrated catalogue is the main thrust of the operation at present although there are plans for shops in future.

The concept of this new company has been researched over the last three years, and the management team between them has considerable experience - over 50 years - of providing equipment for less able people.

For more details and a copy of the first Keep Able catalogue telephone 0933 679426. The address is Fleming Close, Park Farm, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 3UF.

competitive field of open employment.

Alan's job involves interviewing disabled people, assessing their capabilities, contacting possible employers and encouraging them to look at the job applicant's ability, rather than their disability, and developing relationships with companies, employers and disabled people.

Incidentally, Opportunities for the Disabled has recently moved to new offices at:

41 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4SD. Tel: 01 606 4455.

● A new, national monitoring alarm and response service has been launched by Communicare.

It offers a Help Button to summon assistance, a Report Button to indicate daily that all is well and a Comfort Line for advice and reassurance.

The total cost of the basic service is around 60p per day, and all calls are charged at normal BT rates.

For more information contact Communicare, Shirley Lodge, 470 London Road, Slough. Tel: 0753 47817

● The insurance company, M.J.Fish is offering drivers with physical disabilities a discount of 17.5% off the normal rates for car insurance.

For details contact M.J. Fish at 1-3 Slater Lane, Leyland, Preston PR5 3AL. Tel: 0772 455111.

● A system of matching jobs and people's abilities has won top prize for technical innovation in personnel in a national competition organised by the Institute of Personnel Management.

The system, known as Activity Matching Ability System (AMAS), has been pioneered by Remploy at its packing and assembly factories in Sheffield and Rotherham and now plans to extend it.

The system lists 103 job requirements, such as standing, use of hands, hearing, numeracy etc. before each factory job is assessed and each employee is then assessed on his or her ability to carry out each task. A Remploy spokesman said "AMAS helps to take the guesswork out of matching people with disabilities to jobs".

● Remploy has produced a new corporate brochure showing off to the commercial world the breadth and scope of its operation. With 11,000 employees and 94 factories and a turnover of £90 million it is now the largest supplier of protective clothing to the armed forces. It is also the market leader in bookbinding for public libraries and the leading supplier of wheelchairs to the NHS

For a copy of the brochure contact Ron Fosker, Chief Press Officer, Remploy, 415 Edgware Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 6LR. Tel: 01 452 8020

Action speaks louder than words -

In East Devon they are proving that it is possible to put the results of research into practise.

The pioneering Exeter project started in 1983 researched the Unmet Needs of Handicapped Young Adults in East Devon.

It painted a grim picture for this group of *deficient services, *low expectations, *lack of self-esteem, *isolation, *educational problems, *transport and access problems.

This year LINK went to meet the author of the project, Professor Frederic Brimblecombe of the Paediatric Research Unit of the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. As is to be expected from anything undertaken by Professor Brimblecombe and his team the report has not been a lot of empty words.

As Professor Brimblecombe himself pointed out "the purpose of the report wasn't just to identify what was wrong; it was to promote action to try and help meet those needs".

It was significant that the team 'moved into action' at an appropriate time. It was 1985. People were already thinking that change was necessary and indeed some action was already starting such as the plans to create a comprehensive local information service. This service is now based at the Ashclyst Centre in Exeter. A project called Pirate has started up to establish computerised information services in local public libraries covering all aspects of disability related to local facilities. In fact the research work of the team and their investigations helped the process of change by focusing attention on the unmet needs.

So what action has taken place since the report?

The main idea was to stimulate action within the community itself, to stir people with disabilities into action, and to involve the local statutory and community organisations, and where necessary other voluntary groups.

The area was divided into smaller more workable units, i.e. natural local communities such as a market town.

● Three Resource and Development Officers Wendy Bryant, Gill Creber and Monica Crockett, were appointed, with funding from Action Research and the Nuffield Provincial Hospital Trusts, to be responsible for different areas. "They can work across all sorts of boundaries to help to develop 'whole person' services for disabled people" said Professor Brimblecombe. "Above all, their purpose is to act as a facilitator to enable disabled people to work individually

and together to define their own objectives and then to achieve them." As a result of the initiative and stimulus provided by the RDOs a variety of different action and research projects have got underway or are planned....

● The Cullompton Area Disability Action Group was set up, and is run by disabled young people to spearhead involvement in all local issues such as access, transport etc. that affect disabled people, to provide an information service, to support any disabled person in the area, to make

Cullompton Area Disability Action Group



Help Us To Help You

HONITON & DISTRICT D.I.A.L.



Disability
Information
And advice
Line

and maintain links with relevant groups and to be involved with local planning.

● Mid-Devon Access Committee was formed.

● A centre was opened in Cullompton to provide an accessible meeting place for disabled people of any age in the community.

● Plans were made for a Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme in five localities.

● DIAL was started in Honiton. The group is a focus of attention for, and is involved in, many activities concerning disabled people in the area.

● The KIYP club in Tiverton was developed further. This is a group of severely disabled young adults. One positive result was helping the club to get and be able to use its own computerised equipment. It was hoped that this might lead to the club becoming an information centre for Tiverton.

● Directories of local resources and contacts were compiled. Initial planning to produce an Access Guide in Cullompton.

● Honiton Access Group was set up

continued on next page

Action speaks...continued

● Positive steps were taken to provide an agency to help place disabled people in jobs in the area. A survey was carried out with employers in East Devon and the information computerised.

● An opportunities club for severely disabled young adults in Exeter was set up by DRIVE - parents pressure group initiated in Exeter and supported by the Department of Child Health.

● Active Intervention was set up. This is an experimental project to help disabled people 'with special problems'; by this is meant a problem which the disabled person and social workers etc. have been unable to resolve on their own. It can be very complex involving many people, especially if the disabled person wishes to live independently.

"It has been well supported by individual service providers such as social workers, who are often too hard pressed by other innumerable responsibilities to devote the considerable time involved in helping a client to achieve their desired solution for highly complex difficulties of this nature" said Professor Brimblecombe.

Hopefully, rather like the rolling stone, the action spearheaded by the Exeter-based team, now begun, will gather momentum. Already there is a commitment to set up new local initiatives.

The movement has well and truly started in East Devon to improve local resources and foster the successful integration of disabled young adults into their local communities.

Imagine a range of Clothes that's Smart, Comfortable and designed specially to suit your needs.

Have you ever despaired at the lack of comfort and practicality you have to endure, simply because you have to wear clothes that were designed with more able-bodied people in mind.

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Special flats for sale

Flats specifically for disabled people to buy have been built in a development at Gloucester Square, London, E.2.

Pilot Properties Ltd. which developed them hopes to establish the commercial potential of accommodation for disabled purchasers.

Gloucester Square is a courtyard development of 41 houses and flats beside Regent's Canal. The six flats specially designed for people with impaired mobil-

ity are sited in a prime position within the scheme, and will be sold at cost - from £57,000 to £62,500.

Features include wheelchair lift, special shower room, adjustable height kitchen as well as other details such as an alarm system with radio link, charging points for carriages, induction loops etc.

The deeds to the flats have a restrictive covenant to ensure that they will always go to disabled people.

For further information telephone Pilot Properties: 01 267 5681.

APPEALS NEWS

What's in store

Gorseinon and Pontardulais were formally opened by George Sewell on October 7 (see photo on this page), although the latter had already been trading for some time..

We are hoping to be able to report new openings at Portchester (near Fareham), Ebbw Vale, and on a temporary basis, at Waterlooville, in the near future.

SCOTLAND

As most readers will know, Scotland is not covered by ASBAH but by the totally separate Scottish Spina Bifida Association.

We have a good understanding with our Scottish friends but occasional difficulties arise from cross-border fundraising "raids".

Most of these arise from activities such as John O'Groats to Lands End walks, runs, bicycle rides, wheelbarrow pushes etc. Sometimes these expeditions, starting in England, have given rise to fundraising in Scotland.

It would be helpful to all concerned if those undertaking such projects could communicate their intention in advance to Mrs Audrey Smith, MA., at the Scottish Spina Bifida Association, 190 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh EH4 2BW, bearing in mind the general understanding that England, Wales and Northern Ireland on the one hand, and Scotland on the other, should confine themselves to their own side of the border.

Fundraising friends

An important contribution to ASBAH's income is made by people who organise their own events and make us the beneficiaries, sometimes along with other charities, or sometimes exclusively.

The most notable of these is the British Homing World Show of the Year at Blackpool (next year on January 21, 22) in conjunction with the Royal Pigeon Racing Association.

There are many others; for example,



Actor George Sewell at the opening of the Pontardulais shop in October. With him is Solange Davies, the shop manageress and a number of well wishers.

the Croydon Social Club of the General Municipal and Boiler Makers Union who have walked for ASBAH on different occasions, and the annual football matches between Lloyds' brokers and underwriters.

We are also indebted to a number of university, college and polytechnic Rag committees. The work put in by some of these bodies is tremendous and seems to generate a tradition which passes from one generation of undergraduates to the next.

ASBAH was a major beneficiary of the Aberystwyth Rag for some years. Now the sources of Rag support are more diverse. We recently received a handsome cheque from the University of York who raised over £30,000 which they distributed amongst around forty charities, mainly local. The York target for 1988/1989 is no less than £40,000.

On most term-time Saturdays, coaches set off from York to conduct 'Rag Raids'. They sell Rag Mags for 40p each to the lucky locals. They put on concerts, cabarets, drinks promotions, bar quizzes, raffles, sponsored events (parachuting, hitch hiking to Paris and back, ballooning, putting ice cubes down their boxer shorts!!). They also organise publicity stunts, world record attempts, processions, raft races, film evenings and, of course, the Rag Week itself.

The generosity, enthusiasm and hard work of those involved in Rag activities is sometimes not fully realised. Also we can but admire the fertile imagination and inventiveness which goes into the devising of new fundraising ideas.

Events

● A third Wimbledon Greyhound meeting is scheduled for February 21 next year.

● The Conversationalist of the Year is on May 13 and 14 at Glaziers Hall, near London Bridge.



Running is still one of the most popular ways of raising money.

Above: Mr Harry Bentnall who works at Northern Dairies in Derby put his best foot forward for ASBAH in the Derby half marathon. He raised £180 which was made up to £200 by his office. He gave £100 to Derby & District local Association and £100 to ASBAH for its Fieldwork Service.

His help in this way all came about because Mr Bentnall works with the grandfather of Darren Toun, a member of Derby Association.

Advertising

FOR THE USE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER READERS

Rates: £3 for 30 words max; £4.25 for 30-45 words;
£5.50 for 45-60 words.

Cheque or postal order payable to 'ASBAH'

Adverts for the next LINK (Jan/Feb) should be in by
December 20. Send to: The Editor, Mrs Sue Gearing,
The Gables, Long Lane, Wrington, Avon, BS18 7NE.
Tel: 0934 862279

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

BORTH, Nr Aberystwyth. 6-berth de luxe holiday home. Licensed site. Suitable for wheelchair users who live independently. Details: Mrs J. Carter, 1 Meadow Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire.

ISLE OF WIGHT. Very well equipped chalet with easy wheelchair access at **Brambles Chine, Freshwater.** Sleeps 6. Indoor heated pool, club, shop. Details: Ring or write: Mrs S. Gully, Old Princelett, Apse Heath, Sandown, Isle of Wight. Tel: 0983 863354

SELSEY, Sussex. Six berth purpose built fully equipped mobile home. Ramp access. Site near sea. Pool, club, etc. Details: Mrs C. Bugden, 27 The Grove, Sholing, Southampton SO2 9LT. Tel: 0703 444921.

EXCHANGE AND MART

SPEEDWELL SUPAKART battery operated car (red). Five years old. In reasonable condition. Suit child age 5 years to teenager. £400 o.n.o. Tel: 0244 535402. (Clwyd).

BEC SUPER SCOOTER 12 months old and hardly used. complete with battery charger. £850 o.n.o. Anyone interested please contact fieldworker Lynne Young. Tel: St Austell 861062. (Cornwall).

TRICYCLE suitable for 7-10 year olds. Black. Needs attention to spokes, tyres and a good clean up. FREE to a good home. Tel: David Lawrence 0255 675245. (Walton on the Naze, Essex).

SPEEDWELL SUPAKART battery operated car in yellow with wing mirrors and carrying basket. New spare tyre and inner tube. One year old. Excellent condition - hardly used. Suitable 5 years - adult. £600. Tel: 0532 647762. (Leeds).

BEC SUPERSCOOTER with charger. Very little used. £600 o.n.o. Can deliver. Tel: 0761 52537 (Avon - south of Bristol).

WANTED

ORTHOKINETICS PONY 4310 suitable for 4-8 year old. If anyone has one please contact: Nicky Perry, Physiotherapist, Maiden Castle School, Dorchester DT1 2HH. Tel: Dorchester 67224

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Luxury detached bungalow set among magnificent pines in the heart of Clwyd, yet minutes from the market town of Mold.

Specially adapted for wheelchairs. Two bathrooms. Sleeps 4/5.

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As featured on TV and radio, the beautiful 'Mar y Sol Health and Fitness Resort'. Purpose-built, totally wheelchair-accessible. Swimming pools, sports facilities. Apartments for rent or ownership. I can arrange your flights too~! "Brilliant...Amazing" says BBC TV's The Travel Show. Come and see for yourself.

Video (£10 refundable deposit), brochure: Lynne James, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port L66 1JW. Tel: 051 339 5316

EXHIBITION OF PAEDIATRIC EQUIPMENT

**William Merritt Disabled Living
Centre,
St Mary's Hospital, Green Hill
Road,
Armley, Leeds LS12 3QE**

**MONDAY DECEMBER 5
2pm - 4pm**

**Further details from the Centre.
Tel: 0532 793140**

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