



The Disability Rights UK newsletter co-edited with and for young people

Stay informed with news and information on your journey through education, training and work

Schools and colleges to benefit from boost in expert mental health support!

Children and young people to benefit from better support and expert advice in school and college thanks to a new multi-million package of mental health support to help them recover from the challenges of the pandemic.

As part of Mental Health Awareness week (May 10-16), the Government has announced more than £17 million to build on mental health support already available in education settings.

“Our children and young people have faced unique challenges over the course of this very difficult and unsettling pandemic, and while they have shown great resilience, I recognise the need for additional support. “It is essential that children and young people can access the support they need and this extra funding further cements our commitment to their wellbeing, equipping them with the tools to look after their mental health.” Children and Families Minister Vicky Ford

Funding also includes a new £7 million Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme, which provides free expert training, support and resources for staff dealing with children and young people experiencing additional pressures from the last year.

The Department for Education will also fund an adapted ‘Link’ programme which is designed to improve partnerships between health and education leaders in local areas, raise awareness of mental health concerns and improve referrals to specialist help when needed.

Autistic Apprentice overcomes years of anxiety and sleep deprived nights as a teenager, to reap professional success!



Bradley spent four years at West Suffolk College, enrolled on various courses, wondering what he would do once he finished, but couldn't forecast a clear future where he would feel confident in a professional field. For three years alongside his studies, Bradley worked part-time in the retail industry and continued to do so a year after finishing education. During this time, he recognised a strong desire to try something else.

Identified as having Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at three and a half years old, Bradley's mum saw a noticeable difference in his speech and interactions with other toddlers at two years old. Bradley has faced judgement and a lack of understanding from individuals in a work and personal setting.

Shortly after his stint in retail, Bradley was excited to join West Suffolk Council, after applying online for two roles, having two interviews, and then being offered

both positions. Bradley accepted the position as Apprentice Business Support on a Level 3 Apprenticeship programme in Business Administration in January 2020, where combining work and learning was to be his new reality. Nervous about what felt like a major challenge, Bradley had trepidations about balancing coursework and the tasks expected of him at the council, especially with ASD. The loyalty and encouragement of his Skills Tutor, Vanessa Godden from Qube Learning, has seen his abilities to learn rapidly grow and now, at 21 years old Bradley says: *'The biggest hurdle I have faced living with autism is feeling so different to everyone else, performing differently in exams, processing information much slower, I felt I really stood out.'*

Also suffering with bad sleep in my teens, I didn't feel safe in my own home and I was constantly worrying about people breaking in. I always checked to see if the doors were locked, that's how bad it got. I also have type 1 diabetes. The high blood glucose impacted on my stress and anxiety, so that took a bit of time to get under control, and don't get me started on the hormone stage! So, having this condition and autism to deal with is a lot on my shoulders, but the support from my employer, Qube Learning, colleagues, friends, and family, especially my mum, is invaluable as it really keeps me going. It has been an uphill climb, I hope my story inspires others with autism to keep going and remember they are an equal to anyone!

Bradley is encouraged by the prospect of his career continuing to prosper and looks to embark on Level 3 diploma in Business Administration. Working at the council, he no longer feels at a disadvantage with his disability but is supported by his peers, who have taken the time to learn about him, his background and experience with ASD. Passing his driving test and getting best maths student of the year in 2017, he can now look back and see his own merits and is hopeful for more reasons to celebrate in the future.

Qube Learning is a proud to be an OFSTED grade 2 (Good) Recruitment and Training Solutions Provider that works with hundreds of Employers across the country to deliver a range of training and qualifications to a multitude of Students. If you are interested in finding out more about the positive opportunities an Apprenticeship or Traineeship then contact us at: Email: tellmemore@qube-learning.co.uk / Telephone: 01235 833838 / Website: www.qube-learning.co.uk



Upcoming Free Webinars - Online Meetings

1. The support I would have wanted: A hearing impaired careers professional's view of careers

June 10, 2021 at 11:00 AM

Janet Colledge, a careers education professional who has a moderately severe hearing impairment looks at the world of careers advice and support. She will consider possible barriers and solutions with the aim of supporting those considering career paths be it their first job or a career change.

Register [here](#)

Closed Captioning and BSL interpreting will be available at this webinar.

2. Entering and Working in TV and Film Post-production with An Invisible Disability

June 17, 2021 at 14:00pm

Nigel G Honey has over 25 years editing experience in both tv and film as a film editor. He runs Ability Academy, the UK's first online affordable, inclusive and accessible film editing academy inspired by his own invisible disability and his desire for more inclusion in tv and film post-production. Our motto is "taking the dis" out of disability in film and tv training. Our training focusses on student's natural abilities rather than focus on their disability.

Register [here](#)

Coffee Morning at Leighton College

Leighton College is a specialist education provision for students aged 16-24 with a mild to moderate learning difference. The Leighton College is based in Kentish Town, Camden and accepts students from any London Borough.

We are also holding coffee mornings at Leighton College for prospective students and their parents. These will be at 11am and 1:30pm on Friday 21 May and Friday 28 May.

Contact the Elfrida Rathbone Camden Education and Participation Manager, Samantha Childs at samantha@elfridacamden.org.uk or on 020 7424 1617 / 07917 193885 You can visit our website for further information at <https://www.elfridacamden.org.uk/leighton-college/about-us/>

Upcoming Events and Activities for your Diaries

June 2021

- June 08 -13 Diabetes Awareness week
- June 09 - Transverse Myelitis Awareness Day
- June 14 - 20 Men's Health Week
- June 15 - 20 Learning Disability Week
- June 18 - Autistic Pride Day
- June 27 – July- 3 Deafblind Awareness Week



Autistic Pride Day 2021

By Tyler

Every year, organisations from across the globe celebrate Autistic Pride Day on June 18th with a variety of events. The aim of this day is to raise awareness amongst those who are not on the autistic spectrum, so they do not see autistic people as requiring treatment, but as unique individuals.

Autistic pride day shows that autistic people should not be afraid to explore their sexuality.

This annual event was first celebrated by Aspies for Freedom in 2005 and they modelled Autistic Pride Day on the gay pride movement. One of the most significant aspects of the day is that it is not run by charities; it is run by autistic people themselves. Since its beginnings, Autistic Pride Day has been a community event and not a day for other organisations to promote themselves by stifling autistic people. It is now a global celebration that takes place predominantly online.

We should celebrate autistic pride as I think it will be nice to chat and make new friends in the community and needs to be more noticed and more spoken about as it is not mentioned a lot.

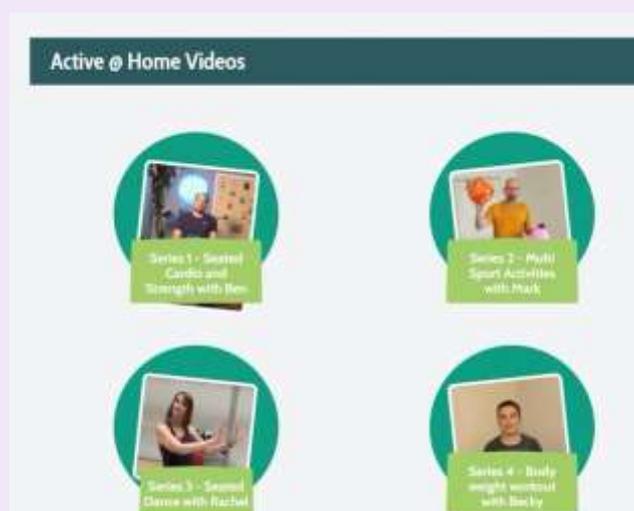
Get Yourself Active



We now have all 4 complete Active@Home series available for you on our YouTube channel and on the new Active@Home section on our website. A variety of fun activities with different trainers, all created from research with 450+ disabled people!

[Get Yourself Active at Disability Rights UK](#)

[@GetYrselActive](#)



College's new charity shop supports students with SEND into work!



Derwen College, near Oswestry in Shropshire, took matters in their own hands when Covid-19 prevented their students getting work placements and have converted a classroom into a charity shop, so their students are able to get some on-the-job retail experience.



The Vintage Advantage, has opened its doors to the public selling a range of quality second-hand clothing, accessories, homeware and books.

Courtney (pictured above) says: *“Working in the shop, I’ve learnt to think more about working independently and as a team, sometimes having to think outside the box. My favourite jobs are steaming the clothes and working on the till. My CV is looking good as I’m learning skills to go out to find a paid job at the end of my time at Derwen College. I’d like to work in a clothes shop like Primark and Next.”*

Retail students Mia and Anais enjoy working at The Vintage Advantage as part of their timetabled work experience. They also work at the college’s on-site print shop and Garden Centre and Gift Shop.

Mia says: *“We clean and sort the clothes and items that come in. Clothes have to be sorted into Men. Women and Children, and into sizes. We put them on hangers in the shop with prices for customers. I haven’t worked on the till yet but would like to soon. When I leave college, I would like to work in a shop, hopefully a chocolate shop!”*

Anais says: *“I think the shop looks amazing. Customers have been really friendly and enjoyed shopping. We are learning skills like how to sort and display items and being friendly and polite to customers. These are skills we can use in jobs after college.”*

School Café rising up the popularity hill!

Finley's experience

Post -16 students at Daventry hill school, opened the Café on the Hill for take away service only, on Wednesday 16th September.

The Cafe offers homemade tasty food, which is freshly prepared daily, by Post 16 students and the Job Coach.

Each week the students follow a rota and work in the café for a minimum of one day a week. Their duties whilst at work include: -

1. Checking emails for pre-ordered food from staff.
2. Completing the food order online
3. Health and safety checks on equipment
4. Temperature checks on fridges and freezer
5. Cleaning the café – wiping down surfaces, sweeping and mopping the floor
6. Serving customers
7. Cashing up
8. Emailing daily special for the next day



Students are enjoying their time working and learning new skills.

Noel aged 16, said 'I like taste testing the food, to ensure my food is good enough to sell.' 'It is hard working in café'.

Working together the students, are reviewing and updating the menu monthly, to ensure that there is something tasty for everyone.

Chayse, who is in Year 12, is learning how to cook for himself and applying functional maths and English into his working day.

All students are required to wear a uniform of a black tee-shirt and trousers, it is good to wear a uniform and makes student feel proud and part of the team!

The café is hoping to open to the public in the near future.

How Covid made me feel

By Noel

In March 2020, the world as we know it, was closed down.

Covid-19, stopped us from doing many things that we could have done, had there not been a total lockdown.

The worldwide pandemic grew feelings of anger, rage, depression, sadness, loss and many more.

Throughout the lockdown, people have been stopped/denied seeing their loved ones, had new laws/rules to abide by and the simplest of tasks became a challenge.

With the vaccination, I can see hope in humans, that don't listen to the new laws/rules and my hope is that they will take this seriously.

How Can Virtual Reality Technology Help Disabled People? (Part 1) *By Sienna*



“Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths.” **The Road Less Travelled** by M. Scott Peck

I was born with a type of Muscular Dystrophy. With medical notations aside it meant I would never be able to walk on my own. Despite that, I had a relatively happy childhood and for this I owe a lot to my dear parents, but as I grew older my disability became an issue.

After secondary school I found myself on the brink of depression and not long after I was assigned for a six month long anti-depression therapy course.

In 2016, quite by accident, I came across some fancy virtual reality training with an emphasis on Disabled people. I was impressed by what potential this technology has to help Disabled people. This first strong impression led me to a few weeks of persistent online research about this technology and eventually I decided to attend some courses about Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality.

How Can Virtual Reality Help Disabled Students?

Equality is something education must stand for. Our schools have made great progress in this aspect. Anyway, there's more to be done. Disabled students face still a lot of different problems apart from a customized infrastructure or similar. I know this from my very own experience in school.

So the question is: Can Virtual Reality Technology play a role in tackling this problem? *yes, it can.* On a major scale, Virtual Reality can provide Disabled students with:

Customization - Inclusion - Participation

VR And People Who Use a Wheelchair

Mobility is the main problem for wheelchair users. I personally used a wheelchair my whole life, so I learned navigating around way earlier, but there are people who start using a wheelchair from a certain age. They find it extremely difficult to move around and I can understand that. Even worse, in most cases, they have to deal with this problem all alone without any help coming through.

A way VR technology is already helping people is by simulating a virtual situation where they have to cross a road or navigate in the building of a school. In such a way, the person can learn to move as freely as possible and what's more important *independently.*

VR simulations of a walking experience can trigger certain parts of the brain to get activated and regain the lost motoric skills. It's not very far from today when we will see doctors prescribe VR headsets instead of traditional therapies.

Furthermore, VR technology can help wheelchair users experience something they could experience otherwise. There are already lots of VR sets created to simulate a tennis game, go hiking, to tour around cities and museums, and so on. And to all these activities wheelchair users can also have access to thanks to Virtual Reality technology.

Mind launches a new Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit!



The Toolkit, consisting of 10 guides, aims to help sport, physical activity and mental health providers to support and engage people experiencing mental health problems in physical activity.

Deaf Advance: Deaf people, employment and career progression - a report by The Royal Association of Deaf People

Between October and December 2020 we carried out a national survey of Deaf people to learn more about the issues, challenges and aspirations of Deaf people in relation to employment and career progression.

Good quality careers advice is crucial to helping someone make an informed decision about what they want to do in life. For Deaf people whose first or preferred language is BSL, it is even more important that any such advice is provided in an accessible manner.

However, the results of our survey show that the experiences of Deaf people in this regard are overwhelmingly a negative one. For instance:

- Three-quarters (76%) of respondents said they either had no careers advice at school or had advice that was not in sign language;
- Only a quarter (24%) received careers advice in sign language;
- Of those who received careers advice at school, two-thirds (68%) said their careers advisor did not understand deaf culture, language or community;
- Of those who received careers advice at school, less than half (41%) said the careers advisor thought they could do the job they wanted.

These results are damning, and suggest that many Deaf people have never had access to careers advice in their first or preferred language

Read the full report [here](#)



Invitation to join the Disabled Apprentice Network!



The Department for Education, together with Disability Rights UK have launched the Disabled Apprentice Network to gather feedback and ideas to address any issues, barriers and solutions to make apprenticeships more accessible and inclusive.

Members of the group are appointed because of their personal experience, and desire to champion apprenticeships for Disabled people. The group will discuss and identify and share experience, advise on key issues for disabled apprentices, suggest solutions and support the development of practical resources and toolkits.

The group meets every month for one hour.

If you are a Disabled apprentice or done an apprenticeship in the past and would like to join the network, then please contact us at getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

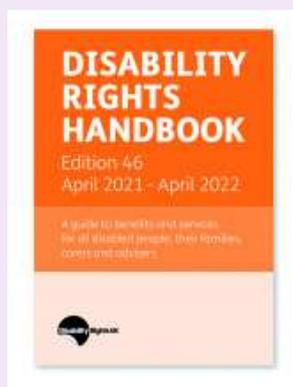
Co- production project

DR UK is interested in young people who would like to participate in our fundraising.

We'd like to sound out your thoughts on a youth-led project which we would make funding applications for, directed and steered by young people themselves (as in, we would co-produce it together).

Anyone who is interested in attending - or who would like to know more - is warmly invited to email Rebecca on rebecca.clarkson@disabilityrightsuk.org.

Disability Rights Handbook now out!



The handbook provides in-depth, comprehensive guidance on the benefits system, explains how social care operates around the UK and includes information about other services and resources for Disabled people.

And it's full of tools and tactics to help you make a successful claim.

www.disabilityrightsuk.org/shop/disability-rights-handbook-2021-2022

DR UK Student Helpline

- Opening hours: 11am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Telephone: 0330 995 0414
- Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org



Contact Us

 Email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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We like to hear from you!

Give us your feedback and contact:

Get-ahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

For a text-only and large-print version of the Get Ahead newsletter:

email: getahead@disabilityrightsuk.org

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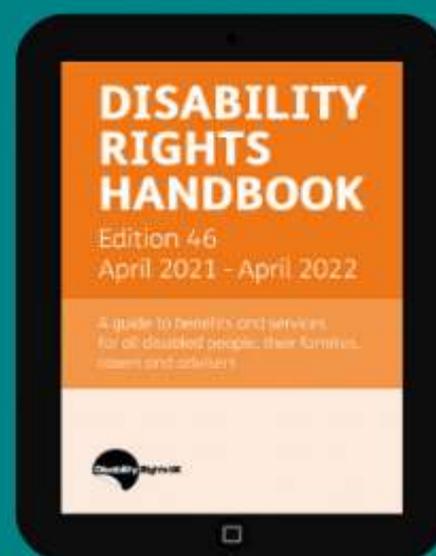
Disability Rights UK

We are Disabled people leading change, and the voice of young Disabled people has to be central to that change.

Disability Rights Handbook ONLINE

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new digital version of our handbook. Created to support remote working, this new format for our flagship publication sits on the well-established AskCPAG platform.

Order your copy now!



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