



## PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER 16

### Social and leisure activities: listings and links

#### Youth Groups and Organisations

These offer fun activities designed to support the personal development of young people of secondary school age, and sometimes a little older. Some organisations also provide activities for younger children too.

#### Youth Clubs

These are usually, though not exclusively, run by local authorities through their youth service. Others are run by churches, schools or by organisations such as the **Girls Friendly Society: [www.gfsplatform.org.uk](http://www.gfsplatform.org.uk)** (girls only). They are usually led by qualified youth workers and sometimes offer specific sessions for particular target groups, such as young people with special needs. In some areas there are youth groups specifically for young people with (various types of) disabilities. For more information about finding groups in your area see the factsheet *Social and Leisure Activities: General Guidance*.

#### Uniformed Organisations

These offer structured personal development and social activities for children and young people of varying ages. For more detailed information about individual organisations, see the links below.

- > Scouts: [www.scouts.org.uk](http://www.scouts.org.uk) and Guides [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)
- > St. John Ambulance Cadets: [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)
- > The Woodcraft Folk: [www.woodcraft.org.uk](http://www.woodcraft.org.uk)

#### Cadet Forces

- > Army Cadets: [www.armycadets.com](http://www.armycadets.com)
- > Sea Cadets: [www.sea-cadets.org](http://www.sea-cadets.org)
- > Air Cadets: [www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets](http://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets)
- > The Girls' Venture Corps Air Cadets: [www.gvcac.org.uk](http://www.gvcac.org.uk)

Many local **police** and **fire services** also run cadet units.

#### Religious Organisations

While affiliated to specific religions/denominations, most of these are open to young people from all backgrounds.

- > The Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade (affiliated to the Church of England): [www.clcgb.org.uk](http://www.clcgb.org.uk)
- > The Jewish Lads and Girls' Brigade: [www.jlgb.org](http://www.jlgb.org)
- > The Boys' Brigade (a Christian organisation): [www.boys-brigade.org.uk](http://www.boys-brigade.org.uk)
- > The Girls' Brigade (a Christian organisation): [www.girlsb.org.uk](http://www.girlsb.org.uk)

#### Youth Groups and Activities for Young People with Disabilities

**Afasic** provides a number of projects which aim to reduce the isolation of young people with speech, language and communication impairments, and develop their social, independence and team working skills:

- > The **Youth Project**, for young people aged 11 – 19, meets weekly on Friday evenings during term-time in Hainault, North East London: [www.afasic.org.uk/young-people/youth-project/](http://www.afasic.org.uk/young-people/youth-project/)
- > The **North Surrey Afasic local group** runs Friday clubs for children and young people living in the Ep-som/Leatherhead area, and Activity Weeks during the summer holidays: [www.afasicnorthsurrey.org.uk](http://www.afasicnorthsurrey.org.uk).
- > **Afasic Cymru** runs two youth groups in Flintshire and Conwy. They meet on Thursday evenings during term time and cost 50p per session: [www.afasic-cymru.org.uk/youthproject.htm](http://www.afasic-cymru.org.uk/youthproject.htm)
- > **Afasic Northern Ireland** has youth groups in Belfast and Ballymena: [www.afasicnorthernireland.org.uk](http://www.afasicnorthernireland.org.uk).

Afasic also publishes the **Youth Info Pack**, which provides a range of useful information for young people with speech and language impairments aged 14 - 25 embarking on adult life. It includes an identity card that can be used to alert other people that the young person has a speech and language impairment. For more information, see [www.afasic.org.uk/publications/general-resources/](http://www.afasic.org.uk/publications/general-resources/)

The **National Autistic Society** runs a number of social groups for people over 16 (or sometimes 18) at the higher end of the autistic spectrum. For more information see <http://tinyurl.com/c5lgwa7>. Some local autistic societies also run their own social groups for young people with ASD. Contact the **Autism Helpline** on **0808 800 4104** to find out if there is anything suitable in your area.

**Mencap** runs the Gateway award scheme which promotes personal development in children and young people over 8 with a learning disability. For more information, see: [www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward](http://www.mencap.org.uk/gatewayaward). Their helpful online guide to accessing and planning social and leisure activities contains plenty of advice likely to be useful to any family with children, whether or not they have learning difficulties: <http://tinyurl.com/ajrny9e>. Mencap also provides a number of leisure services for adults with learning disabilities. These include day opportunities, the 'Me Time' project providing personalised support to access a range of activities in the local community, and sports and arts activities: <http://tinyurl.com/c3zjvos>.

**Phab** is the national charity which aims to promote inclusion by encouraging people of all abilities to come together on equal terms. It runs a number of clubs and other projects for people of all ages, and residential holidays for children and young people: [www.phab.org.uk](http://www.phab.org.uk)

**DANDA**, the Developmental Adult Neuro-Diversity Association, is a support and campaigning group for adults with dyspraxia, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome and other related conditions. They have a number of local groups, a newsletter for members, a range of leaflets and an online arts forum. They also encourage research and organise conferences. For more information, see: [www.danda.org.uk](http://www.danda.org.uk).

### Other Organisations

**The Youth Hostel Association** runs a number of summer camps for young people aged 10 -19. There are discounts for members and for multiple bookings, and bursaries for participants in receipt of free schools meals: [www.yhasummercamps.co.uk](http://www.yhasummercamps.co.uk)

**Young Farmers' Clubs** cater for young people aged 10 -26: [www.nfyfc.org.uk](http://www.nfyfc.org.uk)

**The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme** offers young people the chance to engage in a varied range of activities helping them to develop new skills for work and life and acquire new interests. So, for example, gaining a qualification in first aid might be a useful addition to a CV and lead to a number of volunteering opportunities. For more information about the scheme and to find out about groups near you that offer the award, see: [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org).

### Other Activities

#### Clubs/Classes catering for specific interests/hobbies

These are an excellent way for your son or daughter to meet other people with similar interests. Many activities are open to people of any age or ability but sometimes there will be specific sessions or clubs for certain age groups and/or for people with disabilities. Different areas vary in what they offer, but there is usually a good range, including:

- > Sport and Fitness activities: For details of football and other sports clubs and leisure centres, see [www.goldchallenge.org/sports/sportsfinder](http://www.goldchallenge.org/sports/sportsfinder), or to find martial arts classes specifically see [www.martialartsclubs.co.uk](http://www.martialartsclubs.co.uk) Your local authority Sports Development Officer might also be a useful source of information.
- > Art, Drama, Dance and Music: For details of choirs and amateur dramatic companies in your area, see [www.bbc.co.uk/sing/findachoir.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/sing/findachoir.shtml). For various music activities for children and young people, see [www.youthmusic.org.uk](http://www.youthmusic.org.uk) National Learn to Play Day offers free music taster sessions for under 25s, see [www.learntoplayday.com](http://www.learntoplayday.com).
- > Conservation Activities: For details of groups or projects in your area see: [www.naturenet.net/people/cvgroups.html](http://www.naturenet.net/people/cvgroups.html), [www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org) or [www.groundwork.org.uk](http://www.groundwork.org.uk). **Groundwork** is an organisation that works with people in their communities to make a real difference to the local environment and quality of life. They also work to develop people's confidence and skills:
- > Sometimes museums and galleries run activities for young people and families
- > Churches and other religious organisations can provide a ready-made social circle and are usually happy to welcome anyone willing to help out with the many tasks that need doing.

- > Political parties and campaigning groups, such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) or the Countryside Alliance are always happy to recruit willing volunteers. This page contains links to all the political parties represented in parliament: <http://tinyurl.com/c8f9l33>

Other possibilities may include interests as diverse as model railways, local history, gardening etc.

### Adult Education Classes

As the name implies, these are usually only open to people over 16. Classes often run during the day as well as in the evening and there are generally a wide range of options available including:

- > Work-related skills, such as bookkeeping or training to be a care assistant
- > Leisure interests such as photography or bicycle maintenance
- > Useful life skills such as cookery or DIY
- > Academic qualifications such as GCSEs and basic skills courses in literacy and numeracy

There is usually a fee for adult education classes, but people with a disability and/or low income may qualify for a discount, and certain classes, such as basic skills courses, are often free of charge. For details of a range of different classes throughout the UK, see: [www.hotcourses.com](http://www.hotcourses.com).

### Volunteering

This is an excellent way for adults and older teenagers to do something worthwhile and make new friends at the same time, and young people under 16 can sometimes help out too. Many of the organisations listed above rely on volunteers or you may have other contacts locally. If not, try your local volunteer centre or these websites:

- > [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) - a website run by YouthNet for young people who would like to do voluntary work
- > [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

### Social Networking and Friendship Opportunities

This is another way to chat to friends or make new ones, though obviously it is important that your son or daughter knows how to use social media safely. For more information about this, see the factsheet *Personal and Internet Safety*. Facebook and Twitter are very well known, but there are other options your son or daughter might like to try, including:

- > **The Site**, a website for students and other young people aged 16 - 25 run by YouthNet, includes some quite active discussion boards
- > **Aspergernauts**, which describes itself as 'your universe for help and advice for Asperger's', includes a forum: [www.aspergernauts.co.uk](http://www.aspergernauts.co.uk)
- > **Dyspraxic Teens Forum** is an online forum for young people with dyspraxia: [www.dyspraxicteens.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxicteens.org.uk)
- > **Disabled Friends**, a new website, enables disabled people to chat online and make friends both within their local area and further afield. The website address is: [www.disabledfriends.co.uk](http://www.disabledfriends.co.uk)
- > **People & Places** is a secure, moderated social networking website for people from vulnerable community groups: [www.mypeopleandplaces.co.uk](http://www.mypeopleandplaces.co.uk)

**Afasic Helpline** - Open 10.30 - 2.30, Monday - Friday, tel: **0300 666 9410** or **0207 490 9420**